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PAIN, HUMAN REDEMPTION, AND MEDICINE:
JAMES HINTON'S THEOLOGICAL APPROPRIATION OF PAIN

A Dissertation

Submitted to the McAnulty College and Graduate School of Liberal Arts

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for
the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By

Steven Edward Hansen

December 2011

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Steven Edward Hansen

2011

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By

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Approved November 18, 2011

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ABSTRACT

PAIN, HUMAN REDEMPTION, AND MEDICINE:
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By

Steven Edward Hansen

December 2011

Dissertation supervised by Professor Marie L. Baird, Ph.D.

Hinton's theology of pain posits that an individual's suffering contributes to God's redemptive work in the world. This dissertation explores Hinton's theological appropriation of pain in four ways. First, we examine Hinton's life and writings to establish his personal interest about pain. Factors that contribute to Hinton's theological interest were the death of his brother, his sojourn in Whitechapel, his mental health, and his practice and skepticism of medicine. Second, we examine Hinton's redemptive nexus of suffering, beneficence, and deification in light of the Jewish and Christian traditions. While our exploration shows that the biblical tradition interweaves suffering, beneficence and deification, we also see that the biblical tradition adds elements that Hinton's treatment misses. The tradition shows that society also has an obligation to those who suffer. Suffering and wellbeing are ultimately social issues that require social, not simply

personal, solutions. The serendipitous nature of suffering in the Hebrew bible fleshes out what in Hinton is simply an argument. In light of the serendipitous suffering in the Hebrew tradition, we examined participants in medical trials and the advancement of medicine as possible instances to bolster Hinton's theological nexus. The New Testament suggests that Hinton is too unidirectional in his understanding of the nexus of suffering, beneficence and deification. The New Testament places identification with Christ preeminently ahead of the suffering of the individual. Third, we explore the relevance of Hinton's thinking about pain in his contemporary setting in light of the philosophical, theological, and scientific developments in the nineteenth century. Hinton's metaphysical speculations bridge theology to Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin was unable to connect Christianity to his thinking about natural selection because of his acceptance of ideas within natural theology. Hinton's metaphysical conceptualization allows him to reject natural theology while embracing the Darwinian revolution from a Christian perspective. Finally, we explore modern pain theories and the literature on the role of religious coping on pain and illness to see if Hinton's theology of pain remains intelligible. The modern medical and social science literature sustains Hinton's basic premise that theological outlook can influence one's tolerance of pain.

DEDICATION

In memory of my mother, Edna Hansen, and my wife's mother, Shirley Johnson,
they reflected God's love in life and suffering.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

A basic insight in this dissertation is that suffering is not merely a personal phenomenon; suffering is a social issue that necessitates a societal response. Dissertations are similar. I have been privileged to work on this dissertation with the encouragement of my family, friends at the Knoxville Christian Church and the Natrona Heights Church of the Brethren where I am honored to serve as pastor, colleagues at Duquesne's Center for Teaching Excellence, and the faculty of the Department of Theology. They have suffered alongside me in the dissertation process and lent their help in innumerable ways. In particular, I want to thank Dr. Michael Slusser, Professor Emeritus, who introduced me to Hinton's thinking on pain and served as my dissertation director until his retirement, and Dr. Marie Baird, who took over directing the work upon Michael's retirement. I am grateful, Dr. Baird, for your timely guidance, careful reading of the drafts, editorial suggestions, and camaraderie in all things political. To Dr. Aaron Mackler and Dr. William Wright IV, I extend my gratitude for reading the dissertation, serving on the committee and offering insightful guidance. Finally, I want to thank my wife, Debby, my sons, Philip, Nathanael, and Luke, and my father, Edward Hansen. You have suffered with me through the writing and have been a source of strength.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
Abstract.....	iv
Dedication.....	vi
Acknowledgement	vii
CHAPTER ONE: HINTON AND HIS WRITINGS.....	1
Introduction.....	1
I. The Hinton Family and James' Childhood.....	2
II. Hinton's Life and Writings.....	6
A. First Period (1822-1850): Education and Early Surgical Experience.....	7
B. Second Period (1850-1860): Earliest Medical Practice and Initial Writing.....	8
C. Third Period (1860-1863): Attempts to Earn His Living by Writing.....	19
D. Fourth Period (1863-1869): Exclusive Medical Practice.....	42
E. Fifth Period (1869-1775): Medical Writings and Speculation on Ethics.....	43
III. Contributing Factors to Hinton's Interest in Pain.....	45
A. The Death of Howard Hinton.....	46
B. Hinton's Sojourn in Whitechapel.....	49

C. Hinton’s Mental Health.....	55
D. Hinton’s Practice and Skepticism of Medicine.....	65
Conclusion.....	74
CHAPTER TWO: THE REDEMPTIVE NEXUS: SUFFERING, BENEFICENCE AND DEIFICATION.....	75
I. Hinton's Redemptive Nexus.....	76
II. The Redemptive Nexus in the Hebrew Bible and Judaism.....	81
A. The Hebrew Bible: Monarchial Sacralty.....	81
B. The Hebrew Bible: Early Hebrew Corporality.....	118
C. The Hebrew Bible: The Democratization of Sacralty.....	126
III. The Redemptive Nexus in the New Testament.....	165
A. The New Testament: Christology, Christian Identity and Suffering in Mark.....	166
B. The New Testament: The Redemptive Nexus in Paul.....	190
Conclusion.....	226

CHAPTER THREE: HINTON’S METAPHYSICAL WORLD VIEW.....	228
I. Hinton’s Metaphysical Position and Method.....	228
II. Antecedents to Hinton’s Metaphysical Speculation: Natural Theology and Vitalism.....	239
III. Usefulness of Hinton’s Philosophy: The Relation of Darwin to Natural.....	252
Conclusion.....	262
 CHAPTER FOUR: HINTON’S THEOLOGY OF PAIN IN LIGHT OF MODERN MEDECINE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES.....	 263
I. Major Developments in Modern Pain Theory.....	263
II. Spirituality and Pain in Modern Research.....	276
Conclusion: Hinton’s Theology of Pain in Light of Modern Pain Literature.....	284
 A THEOLOGICAL POSTSCRIPT.....	 286
 Bibliography.....	 28

CHAPTER ONE

HINTON AND HIS WRITINGS

Chapter one is an historical review of Hinton's life and writings to situate his thinking about pain in its personal and cultural context. We will summarize some of the characteristics of the Hinton family that contributed to James' personality and views. We will also briefly summarize James' life and writings to offer a sort of Sitz im Leben for his thinking about pain. Then we will focus our attention on four episodes or situations from his life that significantly contributed to his understanding of pain in a personal way: his brother's death, his experience of Whitechapel, his own mental health, and the state of medicine in the mid nineteenth century. These factors directly contributed to Hinton's understanding of pain. By exploring his family, life and experiences of pain, we will see how Hinton developed as a creative thinker who combined science, philosophy and theology to create an unusual perspective on pain. While a complete biography of Hinton already exists,¹ the present biographical exploration of Hinton will focus on the shaping of his personality and thinking in relation to pain by exploring his lineage, his chronology, and his personal encounter with pain in various manifestations.

¹ An extended biographical account of Hinton's life is given by Ellice Hopkins in Life and Letters of James Hinton (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1883). A briefer biographical account can be found in the work by Sydney Lee, Editor, The Dictionary of National Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1908), IX, 898-901.

I. The Hinton Family and James' Childhood

Hinton's family sets the stage for a creative thinker who was not afraid independently to blaze new ground or explore new avenues. He descended from a long line of Baptist ministers including his father, grandfather and great-uncle.² Independence, exploration, a strong sense of social justice and a propensity to publish were traits that young James saw in his extended family. We shall presently show these traits as we briefly characterize his grandparents, parents and early upbringing.

The grandfather, Rev. James Hinton, married Ann Taylor, daughter of Josiah Taylor, an "eminent publisher of architectural works."³ Galton characterized the Taylors of Ongar as showing "a curious combination of restless literary talent, artistic taste, evangelical disposition, and mechanical aptitude."⁴ As a dissenting minister, the Rev. James Hinton often experienced persecution and personal harm. A group of protestors stoned him as a Jacobin for preaching at Woodstock.⁵ He was a founder of the first school for nonconformists at Oxford because schools affiliated with the Church of England did not permit dissenters.⁶

James' father was the Rev. John Howard Hinton. He was no stranger to controversy. He was an opponent of slavery whose two-volume History and Topography

² Albert Harrison Moore, A Brief Biography of the Three Hintons (Thesis, Baptist Bible Institute, 1925).

³ Francis Galton, English Men of Science (London: Macmillan & Co., 1874), 61.

⁴ Galton, 60.

⁵ John Howard Hinton, A Biographical Portraiture of the late Rev. James Hinton, M.A., Pastor of a Congregational Church in the City of Oxford (Oxfordshire: Bartlett and Hinton, 1824), 255ff.

⁶ John H. Hinton, Biographical Portraiture, 236.

of the United States was “banned in Charleston for its strictures on slavery.”⁷ In his Memoir of William Knibb, Missionary in Jamaica, J. H. Hinton voiced his own views through Knibb’s message to the emancipated slaves: “To be free, you must be independent. Receive money for your work; come to market with your money; purchase from whom you please; and be accountable to no one but that Being above, who, I trust, will watch over and protect you.”⁸ In a dramatic way, Hinton retells the evening of emancipation of the slaves gathered with Knibb at midnight on August 1, 1838, “He pointed to the face of the clock, and said, ‘The hour is at hand, the monster is dying.’ Having heard its first note, he exclaimed, ‘The clock is striking;’ and having waited for its last note, he cried out, ‘The monster is dead: the negro is free’.”⁹ J. H. Hinton’s personal opposition to the monster of slavery led to the demise of the Evangelical Alliance of 1846. The Alliance was an early attempt at ecumenism among British, European and American Protestants. Just when the Alliance seemed successful, Hinton’s motion to exclude slave owners from membership in the Alliance collapsed the whole affair.¹⁰ Through the 1850s, he became the “most celebrated preacher, theologian and reformer” of the British Baptists.¹¹ James Grant in his account of British preachers says, “I am not surprised at the reverend gentleman’s popularity. I look upon him as one of the most original and independent-minded thinkers, either in our metropolitan or provincial

⁷ J. F. Maclear, “The Idea of ‘American Protestantism’ and British Nonconformity, 1829-1840” Journal of British Studies 21, no. 1 (1981): 68.

⁸ As cited by Ronald V. Sires, “Negro Labor in Jamaica in the Years following Emancipation” Journal of Negro History 25, no. 4 (1940): 491.

⁹ John Howard Hinton, Memoir of William Knibb, Missionary in Jaimaca (London: J. Haddon, 1849), 261.

¹⁰ Ernest R. Sandeen, “The Distinctiveness of American Denominationalism: A Case Study of the 1846 Evangelical Alliance,” Church History 45, no. 2 (June, 1976): 226.

¹¹ Maclear, 74.

pulpits, of the present day.”¹² His literary legacy with more than fifty publications includes works on theology,¹³ missions,¹⁴ religious liberty,¹⁵ geography¹⁶ and zoology.¹⁷

Something of what it was like to live in the Hinton household as a child is evident in John Howard Hinton’s Memoir of J. Howard Hinton, an account of his eldest son’s life and death at the age of thirteen.¹⁸ The boy, who the family referred to as Howard, broke out with scarlet fever shortly after James Hinton caught the same fever. Unfortunately, Howard succumbed to the disease. We will return later to the death of James’ brother, but presently we will focus on life in the Hinton household. The home environment was a veritable hothouse of evangelical piety. Mrs. Hinton ended each evening by reading and explaining a portion of Scripture to the boys, Howard and James.¹⁹ Among other activities, the children regularly attended church services, prayer meetings, and

¹² James Grant, The Metropolitan Pulpit: Sketches of the Most Popular Preachers in London: Volume II (London: Stewart and Murray, 1839): 342.

¹³ Cf. Moderate Calvinism Re-Examined (London: Houlsten and Wright, 1861); On Gods Government of Man (London: Houlsten and Stoneman, 1856); Theology; or, an Attempt towards a Consistent View of the Whole Counsel of God (London: Houlsten and Stoneman, 1843); On Redemption, Eleven Lectures (London: Houlsten and Wright, 1859).

¹⁴ Cf. Memoir of William Knibb, Missionary in Jamaica (London: Houlsten and Stoneman, 1847); A Vindication of Christian Missions in India (London: Wightman and Cramp, 1826).

¹⁵ Cf. A Plea for Liberty of Conscience: A Letter to the Right Hon. Sir James Graham, on the Educational Clauses of the Factories Bill (London: Houlsten and Stoneman, 1843); The Case of the Manchester Educationists (London: J. Snow, 1852).

¹⁶ Cf. The History and Topography of the United States of North America (Boston: S. Walker, 1846); Letters Written During a Tour in Holland and North Germany (London: Houlsten and Stoneman, 1851); Notes of a Tour of Sweden (London: J. Nisbet and Co., 1859).

¹⁷ Cf. Elements of Natural History: or, an Introduction to Systematic Zoology (London, 1830).

¹⁸ John Howard Hinton, Memoir of J. Howard Hinton (London: Jackson and Walford, 1835).

¹⁹ J.H. Hinton, Memoir, 49.

accompanied their father “when preaching out of doors.”²⁰ They regularly sang in the church,²¹ and if the number of hymns that Howard wrote before his death is an indicator, they must have been encouraged to write hymns.²² Mr. and Mrs. Hinton also regularly gave writing exercises to the children to increase their piety. One example of a writing exercise was that children, who could write, were to compose a New Year’s letter to their father telling what they wished the coming year would hold for them, as well as, their father.²³ Another exercise given to the Hinton children was to write an “essay on the proper line of conduct to be observed by brothers and sisters toward one another.”²⁴ Perhaps the need for such a topic shows that the Hinton household also contained its fair share of squabbling siblings.

From this brief survey of the Hinton family, it is possible to see the origin of many of the characteristics that James Hinton possessed such as independence of thought, a strong sense of social justice, a spirit of exploration and a bent for publication. Like his family, James was not afraid to blaze new ground by considering issues from unconventional perspectives. Nor was James afraid to take a stand on an issue regardless of the view of the majority on the matter.

²⁰ J.H. Hinton, Memoir, 52-53.

²¹ J.H. Hinton, Memoir, 52.

²² J.H. Hinton, Memoir, 41ff.

²³ J.H. Hinton, Memoir, 49.

²⁴ J.H. Hinton, Memoir, 56.

II. Hinton's Life and Writings

We will divide Hinton's life into five periods around his education, career and writing. The first period includes his education and preliminary medical experience as a ship's surgeon and medical officer for the government. The second period is his initial period of private practice between 1850 and 1860. This was a period of financial worry and the launch of his writing career where Hinton formulated his basic philosophical outlook. The third period of his life included a cessation of medical practice to devote all his time to writing between 1860 and 1863. At this time, Hinton became a regular contributor to Cornhill Magazine and wrote The Mystery of Pain toward the conclusion of this time. The work awaited publication, however, until 1866. Writing and thought were James' passion, but finances continued to be a major problem during this time. Financial pressures drove him back to medical practice beginning the fourth period of his life from 1863 to 1869. During this time, he exclusively devoted himself to the practice of medicine and ceased writing philosophy completely. Having finally achieved an amount of success and financial security, Hinton began writing again in 1869. This final period of his life, from 1869-1875, was devoted to ongoing medical practice, the completion of several writings relating to the medical profession, and creative ethical speculations in the form of personal manuscripts.

A. First Period (1822-1850): Education and Early Surgical Experience

James Hinton was born at Reading in 1822. He was initially educated at two Nonconformist schools.²⁵ His grandfather, Rev. James Hinton, founded the first school that James attended near Oxford. The second school was at Harpenden. Around the age of sixteen, due to straining family finances, James' father sent him to work for a woolen-draper business in Whitechapel. We shall examine the significance of this sojourn in Whitechapel upon James in a subsequent section of this chapter, but we should mention that living in Whitechapel developed a great concern in Hinton for the degradation of humanity that he had witnessed. From the age of seventeen until he entered medical school at the beginning of his twentieth year, he occupied various jobs and lived with relatives in Bristol, Wales and London.²⁶ During this time, James began a regimen of self-directed study. "History, Metaphysics, Russian, German, Italian, Arithmetic, Euclid were each devoured in turn."²⁷ Hinton's studies and great concern for the plight of the impoverished led to a decline in his health and emotional state and ultimately led to his entrance into the medical profession. His habit of restless study and its resulting despondency contributed to his entering the medical profession at the advice of the family physician. The physician believed that James needed more structure in his approach to study. "The lad wants more mental occupation to keep his mind from feeding on itself."²⁸ In 1842, Hinton entered the medical school at St. Bartholomew's Hospital as a surgical student. As was common, Hinton subsequently served as a ship's

²⁵ Lee, The Dictionary of National Biography, IX, 898.

²⁶ Hopkins, 9

²⁷ Hopkins, 9.

²⁸ Hopkins, 14.

surgeon and government medical officer between 1846 and 1850 to gain medical experience.²⁹ He served as a ship's surgeon on a voyage to China onboard the *City of Derry*, and in 1847, he became the medical officer on the *Simon Taylor* in charge of caring for emancipated slaves on their way to Jamaica from Sierra Leone.³⁰ Upon arrival in Jamaica, Hinton was responsible for medical care of the emancipated slaves, the Marine Hospital, jail and poorhouse. Before returning home, James visited relatives in New Orleans where his uncle had been a well-known Baptist minister.³¹

B. Second Period (1850-1860): Earliest Medical Practice and Initial Writing

After returning from abroad, he became engaged to Miss Margaret Haddon and began practicing medicine with Mr. Fisher in London.³² Medical practice in the nineteenth century was not always lucrative, and James worked hard to increase his practice without jeopardizing his belief that medical care should not be restricted for a lack of money. "I can't get enough to give a tolerable (I mean tolerably profitable) day's work every day. It is difficult to obtain good charges unless you charge for medicine, which I am resolved not to do."³³ In 1852, he married Margaret, and his son, Howard, the subsequent

²⁹ Cf. M. Jeanne Peterson, Medical Profession in Mid-Victorian London (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978), 176.

³⁰ Hopkins, 15 and 19.

³¹ For an account of Isaac Taylor Hinton's ministry in New Orleans see the biographical description in James B. Taylor's Virginia Baptist Ministers (New York: Sheldon & Company, 1860), 71-74.

³² Lee, The Dictionary of National Biography, IX, 899.

³³ Hopkins, 106.

mathematician of the fourth dimension,³⁴ was born the following year. Another son, William, and a daughter, Adaline, were born respectively in 1854 and 1855.³⁵

This period of Hinton's life marked the beginning of his writing and the formulation of much of his thought. The most significant work of this time was Man and His Dwelling-Place: An Essay towards the Interpretation of Nature (1859). The work is a mixture of science, philosophy and theology with the purpose of presenting the world as spiritual and humanity as defective in believing the world as dead or inert.³⁶ Hinton repeatedly makes his case in the five sections of the book covering science, philosophy, religion, ethics and dialogues. We must now briefly treat Hinton's basic argument and the theological conclusions that he draws. In chapter three of this dissertation, we will further analyze his philosophical considerations in detail.

Hinton uses science to make his basic case. His belief that humanity's perception of the world is defective is rooted in his appreciation of the history of science.³⁷ Just as pre-Copernican thinkers wrongly understood the universe as revolving around the Earth because of their limited perception, humanity's failure to comprehend that nature is spiritual is due to its failure to recognize that perception is phenomenal. Similarly, just as the evermore complex calculations of pre-Copernican cosmology finally collapsed the feasibility of geocentrism and led to the Copernican theory, the ever-expanding laws of

³⁴ Cf. Charles Howard Hinton, The Fourth Dimension (London: S. Sonnenschein & Co., 1906).

³⁵ Hopkins, 108.

³⁶ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place: An Essay Towards the Interpretation of Nature (New York: Redfield, 1859), 20-21.

³⁷ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 19 and 31.

science are collapsing the notion that nature is inert and calling for a new understanding of nature as spiritual.

Because nature is spiritual, science has been compelled to introduce the conception of law. Incongruous as it is with our thought of inert substance, it has been felt to be not less natural and true to instinct than indispensable for theory. And rightly. In nature law is fulfilled. Perfect obedience is there.³⁸

Humanity's misperception of nature is rooted in humanity's defectiveness. Humans mistakenly assume that their perception of nature is rooted in reality, forgetting that human perception is phenomenal. The phenomenal is not ultimate reality. "The things which we perceive or think, do not correspond to the very fact of being; it is unknown. Phenomena are appearances."³⁹ In confusing phenomena with ultimate reality, humanity reveals its own defectiveness or inertness. Thus, in contrast to nature, which is active and spiritual, Hinton portrays humanity as truly inert.

Man's inertness is such as to cause a physical inertness to appear to him in nature, but it is not that physical inertness. The inertness of man is spiritual, real, actual; a true, absolute death, not a phenomenal one. Physical inertness is phenomenal only.⁴⁰

³⁸ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 48.

³⁹ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 81.

⁴⁰ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 61.

Thus, Hinton, because of his scientific outlook, views nature as truly spiritual and humanity as defective. “Science proves nature spiritual and man wanting in his true life, just as a child learns that a reflection of himself in a glass is only a reflection.”⁴¹

While he builds his case for the spirituality of nature and the defectiveness of humanity from science, he substantiates his theory through an analysis of contemporary philosophical positions. He discusses philosophical idealism, common sense, positivism, skepticism and mysticism to argue his own position. The central feature of these philosophical opinions is their varying stances on ultimate reality and their appreciation, or lack of appreciation, of the fact that human perception is phenomenal and does not perceive ultimate reality.

Hinton rejects both idealism, which grounds reality in thought, and common sense philosophy, which maintains materialism, and advances his notion that the world is spiritual and humanity is defective in its perception of the world. He insists that both philosophies mistakenly accept the phenomena as the fact.

Idealism also rests, like the belief in matter, on the assumption that appearance is the fact. One error vitiates both the opposing schemes. Instead of the true world, which is spiritual and eternal, our natural impression gives us a world temporal and inert, and idealism gives us a world which exists only in thought. Neither will do.⁴²

While rejecting the conclusions of idealism, Hinton insists that the value of this philosophical perspective was exposing the inherent difficulties of philosophical

⁴¹ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 78

⁴² Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 122.

materialism that confused the phenomenal for ultimate reality. Hinton insists that matter is a phenomenon, and he concludes, “There is not a material world, such as we are conscious of perceiving, but there is a truly existing and real world, different from that which we are conscious of.”⁴³

In similar fashion, Hinton treats skepticism, scientific positivism and mysticism. Each has a value, but they are insufficient in their final approaches. The value of philosophical skepticism is that it reveals that “consciousness alone is necessarily defective; it can vouch only for our feelings; it cannot embrace the truth of things, but only the mode in which we feel them.”⁴⁴ Skepticism simply repudiates the authority of feelings, but when skepticism accomplishes this work, it is absorbed.⁴⁵

Our consciousness is accounted for. We understand why our perception and feeling should be such as they are: why a world that has not negative qualities, a world of true BEING, spiritual and eternal, should make us perceive a world inert and wanting in being, a world the existence of which can be disproved . . . We understand that there must be less in that which is to us than in that which is; that the world must be to us physical, because it is felt as inactive.⁴⁶

Similarly, scientific positivism’s value lies in its forcing the recognition of the phenomenal nature of reality, but positivism goes too far in insisting that phenomenal reality is the only knowable reality.

⁴³ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 133.

⁴⁴ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 138.

⁴⁵ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 146.

⁴⁶ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 145.

But it (positivism) errs in stating that our concern is with phenomena alone. That which EXISTS must be that which truly acts; must be the only CAUSE. That which only appears can have no action. Think or feel as we may, our true concern must be with that which exists.⁴⁷

The rejection of the assumption that the world is only as it appears gives rise to mysticism as a necessity. Mysticism's value is its rejection that the phenomenal is the only reality.

Mysticism is the result and necessary complement of the assumption that the world is as it appears. The unconscious protest of humanity against the violence thus done it. It is an effort to fill up the vacancy and defect of being in that which we feel to be. This is the good side of it. It recognizes the defect in man's present state of being, and claims for him higher faculties than those that link him to the phenomenal.⁴⁸

However, mysticism that asserts a means of knowing beyond "ordinary rules of evidence" opens itself to multitudinous errors.⁴⁹ For Hinton, the right approach to genuine knowledge is the combination of all the varying powers of knowing.

To know the truth is to think rightly respecting it, to understand its relations. This knowledge the intellect can attain respecting the fact of being, the right mode of regarding it, a knowledge of our relation to it, a recognition of that which pertains to ourselves in our perception, a consciousness that BEING is not to be known by thought, but by LIVING.⁵⁰

⁴⁷ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 159. Parenthesis added.

⁴⁸ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 175.

⁴⁹ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 172.

⁵⁰ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 169.

Thus in his pursuit to show nature as spiritual and humanity as defective, Hinton finds varying value in each of the philosophical positions and insists that their respective weaknesses find correction in his understanding of nature as spiritual and humanity as defective in its apprehension.

Hinton concludes his philosophical consideration with a chapter entitled “Negation.” He insists that science appreciates negation but philosophy has been slow to come to a similar appreciation. As cold is the absence of heat, or darkness is the absence of light, humanity negatively perceives nature as physical, not spiritual. “By defect, or negation, therefore, man is physical, and perceives the world as physical.”⁵¹

Hinton’s understanding of the world as genuinely spiritual but perceived wrongly by humanity as merely physical requires a wholesale theological reinterpretation. The theological implications of Hinton’s understanding are the next focus of his work. For brevity, we can summarize three theological shifts that Hinton makes in his reformulation of traditional theology: the eschatological becomes current; redemption is universal, and the result of Christ’s work is to make humanity like God. We will consider each of these shifts in turn.

In light of Hinton’s understanding of the defectiveness of humanity in its perception of the world as inert, he repositions theological interpretation away from the eschatological to the present because of his insistence on the spirituality of nature.⁵²

⁵¹ Hinton, Man and his Dwelling Place, 186.

⁵² The logic behind this theological shift lies in the relationship between natural theology and the need to abandon an otherworldly eschatology. On the relationship between

Thus, he refuses to postpone the theological ideas of death, life, damnation, heaven and redemption to some future state. They are current realities. For instance, the scriptural notion of the deadness of humanity is actual and real and finds its basis in humanity's misperception of nature.

Spiritual death is actual death; death in respect to true life and being: the death which constitutes the world a dead world to us. Man is dead to the spiritual, dead to the eternal, dead to that which is; so that mere passing forms are realities to him.⁵³

Hinton similarly understands eternal life as a present reality that God is working out despite humanity's inability phenomenally to perceive it. "Eternal life is that true life by want of which man is such as he is. It is spiritual, actual life."⁵⁴ Hinton's philosophical considerations coalesce at this point and give a mystical emphasis to his understanding of eternal life.

Let the intellect take its place, as dealing not with the very fact of being but with phenomena, which is now no more a religious dogma only, but the accepted result of physical and metaphysical research, and the meaning of the eternal ceases to be difficult, ceases to be fraught with painfulness, either to the intellect on the one hand, or to the heart upon the other. The eternal ought to be, as it is, inconceivable by thought, else it could not be true being; else it must also be a passing, empty show, like earthly things. To know the eternal is to Live.⁵⁵

natural theology and eschatology, see William A. Beardslee's "Natural Theology and Realized Eschatology" in The Journal of Religion, 39, no. 3. (1959): 154-161.

⁵³ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 195.

⁵⁴ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 202.

⁵⁵ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 202-203.

Thus, Hinton ultimately understands eternal life mystically.

To be in time is for mere phenomena to be our realities. God is as a rock beside which flows a stream; we are as a straw which it bears along. That is the eternal life which God possesses; of that man is to partake.⁵⁶

By the use of the term “man,” Hinton believes that eternal life is that which God is currently working out, not merely for individuals, but for humanity.⁵⁷ We shall briefly see how this emphasis on humanity creates for Hinton a turn to universalism, but we must mention that he also understands heaven and hell, damnation and blessing, as current realities. Of heaven, Hinton says, “Not in our circumstances can be the change from earth to heaven, it must be in us; in that taking away that deadness by which man is as he is.”⁵⁸ Likewise, damnation is also current. “Men are now dead or damned eternally; a state from which eternal life raises them.”⁵⁹

Hinton’s second theological shift is toward universalism. He believes that most people reject universalism because they begin with the notion that life is “probation for eternity.”⁶⁰ However, in his repositioning of theological interpretation away from the eschatological, the current reality of human deadness disallows such probation. “If we can see that man is truly dead, there is no more difficulty respecting the absolute

⁵⁶ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 203.

⁵⁷ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 195.

⁵⁸ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 229.

⁵⁹ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 211.

⁶⁰ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 214.

salvation. For probation is thereby excluded, death and probation are incompatible.”⁶¹

The New Testament, according to Hinton, teaches universal redemption:

No words can be more direct, or apparently decisive, than such words as these: ‘I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.’ ‘God sent not His son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved.’⁶²

Hinton insists that, if interpreters accept the universalism of these texts, they can achieve a new understanding of the texts that seem to oppose universalism through a non-eschatological reading. Texts speaking about damnation, election and death as a result of sin do not then diminish universalism, but speak of ongoing-present realities.⁶³

The third shift that Hinton makes in his theological revision is to emphasize that the result of Christ’s redemptive work is to make humanity like God. Hinton’s understanding of the effects of redemption is reminiscent of the ideas of theopoesis or theosis, even though Hinton does not use this language. Christ’s sacrifice reveals the person of God to humanity so that humanity may be like God. Deification is the affect of salvation.

Then first are we truly personal when God fills us with Himself. And God is not a PERSON; one among many. God forbid: He is THE PERSON. Then are we personal when we are divine . . . To be divine is to be personal, to be in the true sense man. Least of all should a Christian man have feared to be made one with God, for what is shown us in Christ, but

⁶¹ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 216.

⁶² Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 213f.

⁶³ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 217.

perfection of humanity in oneness with God? If Christ be divine and yet human, why may not we be human and yet divine?⁶⁴

Sacrifice and giving of one's self characterizes being like God. "Our life shall be like God's, one with His, who lives in giving only."⁶⁵ In deification, sacrifice transforms the painfulness of pain.

When man is made perfect, the defect removed from him, then shall that which is now painful to him be no more painful. Perfect sacrifice is heaven to those in whom love is perfect. Not in our circumstances can be the change from earth to heaven, it must be in us.⁶⁶

At this point, we can see how Hinton's realized eschatology influences his understanding of salvation as deification. Salvation, for Hinton, changes humanity itself, not its final destination. "For heaven nothing must or could be changed but man."⁶⁷ The change occurs through God's life manifesting itself in the individual's life.

God must give himself to us. He must be in us. His life be ours. So we shall want no more; have no more emptiness to fill. We shall be like Him, able to be content with giving. There shall be no more want. The infinite shall fill us; the absolute love and sacrifice, in which alone eternal being is, shall be ours, shall be enough for us.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 253f.

⁶⁵ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 204.

⁶⁶ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 229.

⁶⁷ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 231.

⁶⁸ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 231-232.

Thus, for Hinton, salvation is ultimately deification that results in a change in how the individual perceives “the eternal in utterest sacrifice of self.”⁶⁹

C. Third Period (1860-1863): Attempts to Earn His Living by Writing

Hinton was encouraged by the reception of his writing and decided to abandon practice for a career of thought and literary composition. This vocational change required the family to reduce expenditures. In an effort to reduce expenses, the family moved to a small dwelling in Tottenham and trimmed the estimated family budget to £ 200 a year.⁷⁰

During this period, Hinton wrote fourteen articles for the Cornhill Magazine on physiological subjects.⁷¹ These articles are the physiological counterpoint to his philosophical and theological speculation in Man and His Dwelling Place. Hinton’s articles in the Cornhill, except for “Seeing with the Eyes Shut,” became two subsequent volumes: Life in Nature⁷² and Thoughts on Health⁷³. We shall briefly examine how these articles about physiology support his philosophical and theological perspective, but we first should mention that, in terms of writing and physiology, Hinton was highly

⁶⁹ Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 228.

⁷⁰ Hopkins, 167.

⁷¹ James Hinton, “Physiological Riddles. I. –How We Act,” Cornhill Magazine 2, no. 1 (1860): 21-32; “Physiological Riddles. II. –Why We Grow,” CM 2, no. 2 (1860): 167-74; “Physiological Riddles. III. –Living Forms,” CM 2, no. 3 (1860), 313-325; “Physiological Riddles. IV. –Conclusions,” CM 2, no. 4 (1860): 421-431; “Health,” CM 3, no.3 (1861): 332-341; “Food –What It Is,” CM 3, no. 4 (1861): 460-472; “Food –What It Does,” CM 4, no. 1 (1861), 75-93; “Food –How to Take It,” CM 4, no. 3 (1861): 281-294; “Force,” CM 4, no. 4 (1861): 409-420; “The Fairy Land of Science,” CM 5, no. 1 (1862), 36-42; “What are the Nerves?” CM 5, no. 2 (1862), 153-166; “The Brain and Its Use,” CM 5, no. 4 (1862): 409-425; “Seeing with the Eyes Shut,” CM 6, no.1 (1862): 64-70; “A Meditation; On Skeletons –and Some Other Things,” CM 7, no. 5 (1863): 622-628.

⁷² James Hinton, Life in Nature (London: Smith, Elder, & Co., 1862).

⁷³ James Hinton, Thoughts on Health (London: Smith, Elder, & Co. 1871).

regarded. The editor of the Cornhill, William Makepeace Thackeray, said, “Whatever else this fellow can do, he can write!”⁷⁴ Sir William Gull, a close friend of Hinton and Physician to the Prince of Wales, said that Hinton “was abreast of the best physiology of the time.”⁷⁵ However, he wrote physiology with a view to his theology and philosophy about the world. From a principle in contemporary physiology, he discovered in it a truth that touched all of creation. He drew from a specific physiological point an analogy that became something of a metaphysical perspective. Thus, he says, “the vital organism ceases to be contrasted with the rest of nature, and becomes to us an example of universal and familiar laws.”⁷⁶ For our purposes of understanding Hinton on pain, we can mention several of Hinton’s metaphysical perspectives that he delineated in these articles. These metaphysical perspectives played a key role in his understanding of pain and his thought in general.

The Cornhill articles reveal that Hinton was attempting to create a unified understanding of life. To this end of a unified understanding, Hinton rejects the idea of a supernatural vital force that makes organic life different from inorganic material. “Life is in league with universal forces and subsists by universal law.”⁷⁷ Organic life functions via the same laws and dynamics that take place in the inorganic world. “Physical life is a result of the natural laws, and not an exception to them.”⁷⁸ This conclusion for Hinton places humanity squarely within the world.

⁷⁴ Hopkins, 167.

⁷⁵ The British Quarterly Review 67 (1878): 554.

⁷⁶ Hinton, “Riddles I,” 32.

⁷⁷ Hinton, “Riddles II,” 168.

⁷⁸ Hinton, “Riddles II,” 174

Not aliens are they to the earth on which they dwell, not strangers seeking temporary lodgment and convenience, but in truest sense earth's children, with the child's claim to shelter in the bosom which sustains them all.
Bone of her bone, flesh of her flesh, breath of her breath.⁷⁹

Hinton's physiological speculation ultimately supports his claims about nature being alive that he makes in Man and His Dwelling Place. He insists that humanity's vital force, which some believed to be supernatural, is ultimately a result of chemical processes that take place everywhere within the creation. Thus, "life sets its stamp upon the universe; in Nature the loftiest claims kindred with the lowest; and the bond which ties all in one brotherhood, proclaims one Author."⁸⁰ Hinton goes on to postulate that the vital force that we see in humans might operate at a larger level within the universe.

A group of stars may thus be regarded as constituting a substance – why not a vital substance? We certainly know it to be full of the intensest activities, and to be the seat, especially, of two counteracting forces. Why should not this 'substance' be molded, also, into truly vital force? In short, why should not the multitude of stars constitute one or more living wholes?⁸¹

Physical life, for Hinton, is the "living relation of unliving parts."⁸² We must now try to relate Hinton's physiological speculations to his thinking about pain.

Several elements of seeing life from a physiological and scientific perspective play into Hinton's thinking on pain. We can summarize four points of contact that

⁷⁹ Hinton, "Riddles IV," 428.

⁸⁰ Hinton, "Riddles I," 32.

⁸¹ Hinton, "Riddles IV," 429-430.

⁸² Hinton, "Riddles IV," 429.

Hinton's Cornhill articles have with The Mystery of Pain, which Hinton wrote at the conclusion of writing his Cornhill articles. First, Hinton's understanding of life as larger than the individual is directly significant to his thinking on pain. In The Mystery of Pain, Hinton wanted his readers to recognize that their individual suffering might be a contribution to humanity.⁸³ Similarly, he insists in the Cornhill articles that nature's system is a system of mutual dependence where death and life are necessary for the ongoing working of the whole.

We draw from nature at once our substance, and the force by which we operate upon her; being, so far, parts of her great system, immersed in it for a short time and to a small extent. Enfolding us, as it were, within her arms, Nature lends us her force to expend; we receive them, and pass them on, giving them the impress of our will, and bending them to our will; and then – Yes; then it is all one. The great procession pauses not, nor flags a moment, for our fall. The powers which Nature lent to us she resumes to herself, or lends, it may be, to another.⁸⁴

Second, closely related to seeing life as larger than the individual, Hinton regularly emphasizes in his Cornhill articles that growth and development are dependent on death, decay and loss. While these negative elements of nature seem evil, they are necessary for life to continue. "Life is an action produced by its opposite. It has its roots in death, and is nourished by decay."⁸⁵ In another article, he says, "Without death we could not enter upon life; without processes which are essentially those which we know as processes of disease, we never could have drawn our vital breath; it is by loss we gain, by failure we

⁸³ James Hinton, The Mystery of Pain (Boston: Cupples, Upham and Company, 1886), 40-41.

⁸⁴ Hinton, "Food – What it is," 460.

⁸⁵ Hinton, "Riddles II," 171.

succeed.”⁸⁶ In The Mystery of Pain, Hinton sees pain in a similar light to his understanding of the necessity of death, decay and loss:

How is the hurtful thing to be rendered harmless, the mischief to be neutralised? Our whole knowledge of nature and of life concur in giving one answer: it must be turned to use. Things cease to hurt us then, and then only permanently, when they are made to serve our good. Nor can it be otherwise; for nothing can be annihilated, nothing hindered from having, in some form or other, its full effect. The mere putting away or putting down evils has never succeeded. They return with a violence increased by the delay. The one condition upon which we can really avoid suffering by hurtful things is that we should use them and make them serve us.⁸⁷

Third, the Cornhill articles hint at how Hinton thought the individual might turn the evils of life and pain to human service via the mind. Hinton believed that the human brain, as the seat of consciousness, related to the rest of the body as a type of constitutional monarch: “A sort of constitutional monarchy exists within us; no power in this small state is absolute, or can escape the checks and limitations which the other powers impose. Doubtless the brain is King.”⁸⁸ In other articles, he mentions “the dominion of mind,”⁸⁹ that rules “all matter”⁹⁰ as the “crown and flower of all the physical development of force.”⁹¹ The point behind Hinton using such monarchial language is to render “the

⁸⁶ Hinton, “A Meditation; on Skeletons,” 628.

⁸⁷ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 102.

⁸⁸ Hinton, “What are the Nerves,” 166.

⁸⁹ Hinton, “Food – What it Does,” 79

⁹⁰ Hinton, “The Brain and its Use,” 410.

⁹¹ Hinton, “The Brain and its Use,” 418.

whole body the representative and exponent of the soul.”⁹² Thus, thoughts hold sway over matter. One’s thoughts can influence digestion and health. This can work for good or ill. Hinton gives the mind a similar role in his thinking about pain:

What we can truly say on this point is, that there are certain things which are painful to our bodily senses when these are not controlled or modified by the state of the mind. It is as truly our nature not to feel pain from the ordinarily painful things at some times, as it is to feel them painful at others.⁹³

Hinton relates the mind and thinking to his conception of life being larger than the individual and to health when he says, “No man is truly healthy who is thinking about his health. Happiness, goodness, health – all are one kin; all consist in the full outpouring and interflowing of our life with that which is around us.”⁹⁴ We shall return to the relationship of an individual’s outlook and its effects upon health when we consider Hinton’s practice and skepticism of medicine toward the end of this chapter. Finally, the Cornhill articles also echo his insistence in Man and His Dwelling Place that appearances are phenomenal and do not exhaust reality. Humans “only know *phenomena*” and “the meaning simply is that our observation and our thought penetrate only appearances.”⁹⁵ Hinton summarizes the significance of this phenomenal reality by saying, “In short, all nature grows like an enchanted garden; a fairy world in which unknown existences lurk under familiar shapes, and every object seems ready, at the shaking of a wand, to take on

⁹² Hinton, “The Brain and its Use,” 419.

⁹³ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 44-45.

⁹⁴ Hinton, “Health,” 332-333.

⁹⁵ Hinton, “The Fairy Land of Science,” 39.

the strangest transformations.”⁹⁶ As we now consider Hinton’s The Mystery of Pain, we shall see these ideas that are present in the Cornhill articles reappearing there.

Toward the conclusion of this third period of Hinton’s life in which he attempted to make his living as a writer, he produced The Mystery of Pain. The volume awaited publication until 1866. The Mystery of Pain was a widely popular treatise. It has been described as “obscure” and “not sufficiently developed and illustrated to be clear.”⁹⁷ However, part of the book’s popularity undoubtedly was its brief and straightforward style. In the words of Virginia Woolf, “Illness makes us disinclined for the long campaigns that prose exacts.”⁹⁸ The brevity of the book combined with Hinton’s eloquence makes the book quite readable. The fact that the book is “not sufficiently developed and illustrated” obviously is true. Besides his own reasoning which makes up the bulk of the book, Hinton only quotes five outside sources: the Bible, Trench’s Memoirs, Marcus Aurelius’ Meditations, Milton’s “When I Consider How my Light is Spent,” and Tennyson’s “The Two Voices.” However, the argument of the book seems far from obscure and suffering from lack of clarity. We shall currently summarize the book to show its overall argument.

The original work was published in 1866 with a new edition being issued in 1874. In 1886, an American issue was published by Cupples, Upham and Company of Boston. This release of the book contains the preface to the new edition of 1874 but adds an introduction by James R. Nichols. In introducing Hinton’s argument, Nichols says, “The

⁹⁶ Hinton, “The Fairy Land of Science,” 38.

⁹⁷ This is the assessment of the review in the New Englander and Yale Review 31, no. 201 (October 1872): 774.

⁹⁸ Virginia Woolf, On Being Ill (Ashfield, Mass.: Paris Press, 2002), 19.

cure for pain which he brings to view rests on a religious basis, and hence has no meaning or significance to those destitute of religious faith.”⁹⁹ Hinton lays out his argument in nine chapters. The preface to the new edition attempts to prepare the reader for the argument of the book through an allegory of an island of pandemic rheumatism. Separated from other societies, the people of this island come to believe that walking is evil because of its great pain. “And if it could be explained to them that the cause of their pain was not anything bad in walking, but only their own disease, that itself would be a great gain for them.”¹⁰⁰ Hinton reveals the relationship of this allegorical story to his argument about pain when he says:

Now this is like the idea I have tried to explain in this little book; namely, that things which we have inevitably called evil may yet be truly good. My thought was that all which we feel as painful is really giving, --- something that our fellows are better for, even though we can not trace it; and that giving is not an evil thing, but good, a natural delight and good of man; and that we feel it painful because our life is marred.¹⁰¹

Thus, several features of Hinton’s understanding of pain though, undeveloped, are present in this allegory. Human life at present is marred; the greatest good and purpose of all life is self-giving; when humans feel pain, they are in reality contributing to the betterment of humanity; the fact that humans can not completely comprehend their contribution to humanity does not negate it; behind the human experience of pain is the reality that a person’s life is participating in helping humanity. In the nine chapters of the book, Hinton lays out these thoughts and others in much smaller logical steps.

⁹⁹ Hinton, Mystery, vi.

¹⁰⁰ Hinton, Mystery, 2.

¹⁰¹ Hinton, Mystery, 2-3.

Chapter one opens by dividing humanity into three classes: Those whose pleasures overbalance pain, those who suffer but have such strength and felicity that their hearts are not oppressed by their suffering, and those whose pain leaves intolerable anguish. Hinton writes for this third group of people. The remainder of chapter one essentially consists of three arguments. Hinton first shows that those who suffer such intolerable anguish have the right to know why they are suffering. There can be no doubt at this point that Hinton is writing consolation theology, not theodicy. He writes from “an assurance that there must be in God’s world a right, a perfect reason, which would not balk our hearts or mock our hopes if we could know.”¹⁰² Thus, for Hinton, there is no question of justifying God. Rather, Hinton justifies the sufferer’s desire to know God’s perfect reason behind pain by using two scriptural citations: a paraphrase of Ezekiel 36:37 and John 15:14-15.¹⁰³ Drawing from both testaments of Christian scripture, Hinton shows the reader that God is not resistant to inquiry. He then moves to his second argument that gaining such knowledge might alter and transform the experience of pain. “I believe that by such knowledge sorrow would be turned into joy.”¹⁰⁴ While Christianity points to such knowledge via the Paraklete, the consolation of the gospel, the eschatological hope of wiping away tears, and Jesus’ insistence that his disciples be cheerful despite tribulation, consolation may come from any quarter because God is bending everything to this same end.¹⁰⁵ At this point, we glimpse Hinton’s metaphysical perspective: there is more to reality than what the eyes openly behold.

¹⁰²Hinton, Mystery, 10.

¹⁰³ Hinton, Mystery, 11.

¹⁰⁴ Hinton, Mystery, 12.

¹⁰⁵ Hinton, Mystery, 12.

And there are thoughts which would do this; thoughts which are possible to us now: in some sense, indeed, now first possible to us, though open to all men since Christ and his apostles preached. Old thoughts, and yet new; as old as the gospel, yet taught us with fresh evidence and proof by the last discoveries of science, which do but gather up the testimony of Nature to that good news, and bid us seek beyond the visible the secret of our life.¹⁰⁶

To discover and apply that which is not openly visible could transform how individuals experience pain. “It is in the power, therefore, of the discovery of an unknown or unregarded fact to alter our feelings – even to invert their natural character.”¹⁰⁷ Finally, Hinton argues that one area where pain is transformed from an evil to the highest good is when it is endured for the sake of another.¹⁰⁸ When pain is borne for another’s sake, such as in the cases of heroes and martyrs, it is transformed from an evil to the good. Heroes and martyrs are never considered evil. They are examples of humanity in its true glory and perfection.¹⁰⁹ Thus, if those who suffer could understand all their pain in the light of martyrdom, such knowledge would transform how humans regard pain.¹¹⁰

In chapter two, Hinton combines his basic metaphysical perspective with his understanding of the human condition to develop a soteriological outlook that gives a salvific function to all pain. Every form of pain thus falls within the rubric of martyrdom and sacrifice. Again, Hinton’s metaphysical perspective essentially holds that there is more to reality than what is visible to the naked eye. “There exists in all human experience something unseen, some fact beyond our consciousness, so that what is the

¹⁰⁶ Hinton, Mystery, 16.

¹⁰⁷ Hinton, Mystery, 17.

¹⁰⁸ Hinton, Mystery, 19.

¹⁰⁹ Hinton, Mystery, 20.

¹¹⁰ Hinton, Mystery, 20-21.

seeming of our life is not the truth of it.”¹¹¹ He combines this notion with the assertion that the present situation is deeply affected by an evil that requires a reconstruction and restoration in human nature. The combination of Hinton’s basic metaphysical perspective with his understanding of the human condition results in Hinton’s soteriology. “If man’s nature needs a change, and there is some fact we are not conscious of causing our experience, then may not this fact be the working of that very change in man?”¹¹² Indeed, all human experience “is the working out of change in man . . . the carrying out of man’s redemption.”¹¹³ The particular dimension of human experience which Hinton associates with redemption is pain.

To connect all our experience with such an end would enable us to read it entirely anew. For by giving to our pains a place of use and of necessity, not centered on ourselves, but others chiefly, as existing for, and essential to, God’s great work in the world; --- by giving to our painful experience this place, its whole aspect would be altered.¹¹⁴

In the remainder of chapter two, Hinton attempts to legitimate his soteriological perspective theologically and experientially. Theologically, a soteriological use of pain seems to be appropriate because of Christ, the testimony of scripture and the very nature of God. All pain identifies “in meaning and end, with the sufferings of Christ” who “is the Revealer to us of Human Life.”¹¹⁵ God gives to humanity the gift of being used and sacrificed like Christ for the best and greatest end, human redemption. Hinton preeminently sees this in Colossians 1:24 “(I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions

¹¹¹ Hinton, Mystery, 22.

¹¹² Hinton, Mystery, 24.

¹¹³ Hinton, Mystery, 24.

¹¹⁴ Hinton, Mystery, 24-25.

¹¹⁵ Hinton, Mystery, 25.

of Christ, for his body's sake, which is the Church)".¹¹⁶ While Christ and scripture show the redemptive value of pain, Hinton asserts that this notion is part and parcel of the nature of God. It is the nature of God to spring "forward with eager haste to take (human misery) on Himself, finding there alone the means to make us know Him."¹¹⁷ Echoing back to the third argument of chapter one that when pain is borne for another's sake, such as in the cases of heroes and martyrs, it is transformed from an evil to the good, we now know the reason for understanding God as "the blest, the happy Being."¹¹⁸ Amazingly, such blessedness is potentially communicable to humans. "If this one fact of the use of our lives by God in the redemption of the world were true, the very foundations of our lives would be changed, the current of our thought and feeling must pour itself through a new channel."¹¹⁹ Hinton now turns to argue the experiential reasonableness of the fact that God, unbeknown to individuals, is accomplishing human redemption via their ongoing human experience. Here again we find Hinton's basic metaphysical perspective (that there is more to reality than what the retina openly beholds) at work. Humans can't perceive all the effects of the events of their lives. They see what they esteem. "So that the thought I have suggested, that in all our experience there is some unseen relation to spiritual things --- to a spiritual work in man --- makes on us no new demand."¹²⁰ It would be false to think that there is no unseen bearing upon human life. Science proves through its discoveries of air pressure, the earth's motion, the hidden power of atoms, chemical affinity, electricity, to name only a few, that individuals do not perceive the

¹¹⁶ Hinton, Mystery, 26.

¹¹⁷ Hinton, Mystery, 27. Parenthesis added for clarity.

¹¹⁸ Hinton, Mystery, 27.

¹¹⁹ Hinton, Mystery, 28.

¹²⁰ Hinton, Mystery, 30.

whole of reality. For Hinton, as a surgeon and person of science, to limit one's thoughts to immediate impressions is the greatest source of human error. "And if a certain effort is demanded to free ourselves from the dominion of our too small impressions, it is but the same effort which is, or has been, the condition of all knowledge."¹²¹

Hinton realizes that he has radically departed from traditional thought on the usefulness of pain. He imbues human pain with soteriological significance and must now show in chapter three why the traditional understandings about pain are inadequate. Hinton first criticizes each of the three commonly expressed uses which pain serves. Then, he argues that these uses are inadequate because they only consider the individual and fail to see pain in terms of humanity at large. We must now briefly consider Hinton's criticisms of traditional thought about pain's usefulness. The first commonly expressed view concerning pain's usefulness, according to Hinton, says, "Bodily pain prompts us to many actions which are necessary for the maintenance or security of life, and warns us against things that are hurtful."¹²² Hinton critiques this position by arguing that pain too often is disproportionate to any beneficial use that it might serve. In disease, pain usually produces such exhaustion that it becomes in itself a danger to which life succumbs.¹²³ A second commonly expressed view concerning pain's usefulness is that pain serves as a punishment for sin: "Suffering is the minister of justice."¹²⁴ What is most problematic about this position is the reality that suffering is just as likely to fall on the particularly innocent. "Of all the sorrows which befall humanity, how small a part falls upon the

¹²¹ Hinton, Mystery, 33.

¹²² Hinton, Mystery, 34.

¹²³ Hinton, Mystery, 35.

¹²⁴ Hinton, Mystery, 37.

specially guilty.”¹²⁵ Indeed, both dissipation and caring for others can end in identical ruin. If pain is the minister of justice, it is simply fickle. The pedagogical use of pain is the third commonly expressed view. Pain “disciplines and corrects the erring, chastens and subdues the proud, weans from false pleasure, teaches true wisdom.”¹²⁶ However, “unhappily it more often fails to teach or subdue. Often it hardens or perverts.”¹²⁷ Hinton admits that each of these commonly held views concerning pain might be valid, but that these uses of pain are secondary in light of their inadequacies and their focus on individualistic explanations. “To know the secret of our pains, we must look beyond ourselves.”¹²⁸ This is what Hinton attempts to show in the next chapter.

In chapter four, Hinton attempts to show how experiences of pain must be understood for the benefit of others in order to appreciate the latent significance of pain as pointing to the human capacity of love. The chapter could be called an epistemology of pain. Feelings of pain and their severity are influenced by multiple thought processes. Thus, pain and pleasure are not fixed and definite, but are influenced by one’s mental condition. Examples where pain is minimized by preoccupation are numerous. Soldiers often feel no immediate consequence of an injury as long as they are occupied by the battle. Small inconveniences daily are ignored while an individual intently works. The feeling of pain is also influenced by strong emotions such as in the cases of martyrs and ascetics. “What we can truly say on this point is that there are certain things which are painful to our bodily senses when these are not controlled or modified by the state of the

¹²⁵ Hinton, Mystery, 37.

¹²⁶ Hinton, Mystery, 38.

¹²⁷ Hinton, Mystery, 38

¹²⁸ Hinton, Mystery, 41.

mind.”¹²⁹ Love also works to banish or minimize pain, but it differs from other strong emotions and other preoccupations in its capacity to actually turn what is painful into a source of joy.

Pain, we may say, is latent, in our highest state. It lies hidden and unfelt in the form of devoted sacrifice; but it is there, and it would make itself felt as pain if the love which finds joy in bearing it were absent. Take, for example, the offices rendered with joy by a mother to her babe: let love be wanting, and what remains? Not mere indifference, but vexation, labor, annoyance. A gladly accepted pain is in the mother’s love; it is in all love that does not contradict the name.¹³⁰

When love is removed, an individual only knows her/his sacrifice as pain. Thus, pain in the world signifies a want in humanity for a greater love. Humanity is made for pain because it is made for love.¹³¹ In what remains of chapter four, Hinton wants to avoid being misunderstood as espousing a cosmic doctrine of masochism. He insists that pain is evil; to be happy is good. Therefore, individuals should pursue happiness and shrink from pain. However, Hinton insists that the highest and most genuine human happiness is rooted in sacrificial love and that God has so ordered the creation that any want of love intensifies pain.¹³² Pain is thus necessarily latent in humanity for the recognition of genuine joy. It is latent in humanity because it is latent in God and Christ.

God must teach us better, and to do so He shows us the root and basis of His own. Stripping off His infinitude, and taking infirmity like ours, He bids us look and see! The only happiness He has, or can bestow, bears martyrdom within it. If He does not suffer, it is only that His life is

¹²⁹ Hinton, Mystery, 44-45.

¹³⁰ Hinton, Mystery, 46.

¹³¹ Hinton, Mystery, 49.

¹³² Hinton, Mystery, 50.

perfect; His love has no hindrance, no shortcoming, and can turn all sacrifice to joy. He stands our great example, not exempting Himself from toils and sacrifices . . . It is sacrifice which binds us to God, and makes us most like Him: sacrifice that to us is sorrow, wanting life and love; but to Him, supreme in both, is joy.¹³³

Thus, “when we say pain is an evil,” we must “rightly mean that our feeling it to be pain is an evil.”¹³⁴ Deliverance from pain can come in two ways: its removal or the addition of love.

Chapter five continues to show how pain is necessarily latent within a life of joy and also shows that the inability to endure pain is evidence of the marred nature of humanity. The latter development in chapter five is an expansion of how Hinton in chapter two understands the human condition as marred and in need of change. Hinton makes his case by advancing four lines of reason from human experience and by analogy shows his theological perspective. First, pain is essential to a life of joy.¹³⁵ For Hinton, this is evident in human experience. Human enjoyments, such as gardening, field sports, active amusements, mountain climbing and picnics, contain inconveniences and require some endurance. “Our enjoyment, by the very construction of our nature, absorbs and takes into itself as a necessary element a certain amount of pain; that is, of what would, if it stood by itself, be pain.”¹³⁶ Thus, there is some pain involved in all pleasure. Second, a life without pain ceases to be enjoyable. Without pains accepted, pleasure is not enduring. “A life from which everything that has in it the element of pain is banished,

¹³³ Hinton, *Mystery*, 52-53.

¹³⁴ Hinton, *Mystery*, 53.

¹³⁵ Hinton, *Mystery*, 57-58.

¹³⁶ Hinton, *Mystery*, 60-61.

becomes a life not worth having; or worse, of intolerable tedium and disgust.”¹³⁷ Third, how much pain an individual can absorb into pleasure is not fixed. A strong and healthy person can endure more than a weak or sickly person.¹³⁸ Fourth, it is a sign of sickness when that which is part of a life of joy cannot be absorbed and is understood only as pain. A sick person finds pain in what delights the healthy person, and the sick find pleasure in that which a healthy person finds unendurable.¹³⁹ On the basis of these four lines of reason, Hinton draws his theological analogy:

Now this thought, which sprang so naturally from our every-day experience, connected itself at once with the thoughts that have proceeded. Is not man sick, falling short of his perfect life, and therefore feeling as pain that which is the rightful condition of his joy?¹⁴⁰

Hinton here returns to his theological appropriation of pain as sacrifice for the sake of humanity and source of genuine joy. “All pains may be summed up in sacrifice; and sacrifice is ---of course it is--- the instrument of joy.”¹⁴¹ The human inability to perceive this is evidence of the marred condition of humanity. “We must reckon, not the pains too great, but our life marred . . . But make us whole, and joy will banish pain.”¹⁴²

How God is making humanity whole is the subject of chapter six which presents human redemption vis-à-vis pain, scripture, universalism, human nature and history. Hinton defines redemption as “the raising up of man from the evil condition in which he feels sacrifice as pain, into a condition in which it is felt as joy, a condition of true and

¹³⁷ Hinton, Mystery, 59.

¹³⁸ Hinton, Mystery, 61.

¹³⁹ Hinton, Mystery, 62.

¹⁴⁰ Hinton, Mystery, 64.

¹⁴¹ Hinton, Mystery, 66.

¹⁴² Hinton, Mystery, 71.

perfect life.”¹⁴³ He assumes that God is doing this work and that redemption is taking place. All events, whether joy or sorrow, perplexity or pleasure, gain or loss, are working out human redemption. “So that we may take up each one of our pains and sorrows, and say, ‘Man’s redemption is carried out in this . . .’”¹⁴⁴ The three evidences for such a view of human redemption are the scripture, human nature and history. In relation to scripture, Hinton gets into the issue of universalism. “And here I may briefly say that to my own mind the language of the New Testament appears unequivocally to affirm the redemption of all men.”¹⁴⁵ He summarizes his scriptural arsenal for this position when he says,

And the apparent meaning of many passages that we may easily recall, which speak as if Christ’s kingdom were to embrace each member of the human race, telling us that He will draw all men to Him; that every knee shall bow in His name; that God shall be all in all; --- the apparent meaning of these passages may grow clear to our purged eyes as the true burden of the gospel.¹⁴⁶

However, Hinton insists that one does not need to accept universalism to appreciate that one’s sufferings serve their part in redemption. Colossians 1:24 (“I fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ, for his body’s sake, which is the Church”) could be read as applying to a part of humanity and not the whole of humanity according to Hinton.¹⁴⁷ While Hinton’s conception of redemption rests primarily on scripture, he also sees evidence for it in human nature and history. In terms of human nature, humanity is constituted for sacrifice. “Surely in the very constitution of our nature, made as it is for

¹⁴³ Hinton, Mystery, 73.

¹⁴⁴ Hinton, Mystery, 74.

¹⁴⁵ Hinton, Mystery, 75.

¹⁴⁶ Hinton, Mystery, 77-78.

¹⁴⁷ Hinton, Mystery, 75.

sacrifice, constructed to find its chief joy only there, feeling, even in its degradation, that no other joys are fully worthy of it, proof is given that man is designed and destined for a life proportioned to his powers.”¹⁴⁸ History also evidences that sacrifice is the means of ultimate human fulfillment. “Dark and unmeaning as (history) looks, this at least is visible in it, that without sacrifice no permanent satisfaction or truly good result is suffered to be attained.”¹⁴⁹

Hinton describes chapter seven as a recapitulation based on two inverted thoughts. First, humanity understands sacrifice as pain, and second, humanity perceives what is really good as evil. If individuals could recognize that they feel pain where they should sense sacrifice and they thus perceive good as evil, they could better understand two other mysteries: God reveals God’s Self in Christ through suffering and death, and the reason why human lives are full of pain and sorrow. In relation to Christ’s suffering, Christ reveals the nature of the joy within love that bears sacrifice and sorrow for the sake of others. “Nor could our human life be otherwise than full of sorrow too.”¹⁵⁰ The bulk of the chapter is an exhortation that somehow behind human pain exists the reality that we are a sacrifice for the good of others.

The broken remnants of the perfect life of joy are these: these pains, these multiplied and dire distresses, these clouds which to us veil the heavens in despair. Nor are they remnants only; they are germs from which the perfect life may grow; they are omens of victory and delight; the basis upon which is to be built up a joy for which they cannot be too great. Of

¹⁴⁸ Hinton, Mystery, 79.

¹⁴⁹ Hinton, Mystery, 80.

¹⁵⁰ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 82.

all that could not be spared from our life, our sacrifice is that which could be spared the least.¹⁵¹

Thus, humanity must ultimately recognize that “pain is sacrifice” and “is changed to good when borne for others.”¹⁵² Hinton attempts to drive this point home and cites Marcus Aurelius’ Meditations and Milton’s “When I Consider How Light is Spent” to this effect. He concludes, “And so the pain of life is made good – all its pain; not indeed to our sensuous feeling, but to that deeper feeling which rules and subordinates the other . . . Only let the love be strong enough, and pain cannot be too great, nor loss too absolute.”¹⁵³ Hinton admits that it takes faith to believe that one’s pains are unrealized sacrifices for humanity.¹⁵⁴ He wants us to believe that deliverance from pain does not occur through its removal but through the addition of the belief that pain serves the good.¹⁵⁵ He continues, “And thus there is no mystery in pain. The world were an utter and hopeless mystery if pain were not. Where, then, would be the basis and the root of love, the prophecy of an enlarged and enobled nature? Where the revelation of our life in Christ?”¹⁵⁶ Hinton admits that his understanding of pain raises two difficulties. They are two questions: Can there be a satisfactory treatment of the issue of pain without recourse to sin? If sacrifice is good, and painful things are best, then shouldn’t we desire pain as in asceticism? The first question finds an answer in this chapter, but the second question makes up the next chapter in the book. Hinton asserts the connection of pain to sin via

¹⁵¹ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 84.

¹⁵² Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 85.

¹⁵³ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 91.

¹⁵⁴ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 90-92.

¹⁵⁵ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 93-94.

¹⁵⁶ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 95.

“perversion of feeling, and lack of life, whereby sacrifice is felt as pain.”¹⁵⁷ His focus is mainly on how human perception of pain occurs. The presence of pain, according to Hinton, does not alter what is genuinely good about life. Genuine good and happiness always have and forever will exist in sacrifice. Christ’s redemptive work is to restore the dignity of sacrifice while removing the veil of our pain.

And if it should be asked, How, then, did Christ become subject to pain, seeing that in Him was no sin? The answer is found in the fact that Christ took our infirmity; the disease of our nature was laid on Him, that He might remove it. He shared our feeling, that He might reveal the Father to us, and deliver us from the evil that He shared.¹⁵⁸

In chapter eight, Hinton will address the question about desiring pain.

Two concerns are at work in Hinton’s discussion of the question of desiring pain in chapter eight. He knows that philosophically pain is an evil to avoid (and happiness is a good to seek), and he knows theologically that asceticism which desires pain for pain’s sake is an aberration. Thus, Hinton insists, “Pain is evil . . . we seek its utter destruction.”¹⁵⁹ However, pain and sacrifice exist as mingled in the present condition of humanity. Hinton sorts out this mingling when he says:

Only that painful thing is good which has in it the roots of pleasure. And this is that alone which serves other’s good. Therefore no arbitrary, self-chosen sacrifice is good; there is no source of joy in that; it fails of the first condition. Only that sacrifice is good which either we accept for another’s

¹⁵⁷ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 96.

¹⁵⁸ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 96-97.

¹⁵⁹ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 99.

sake, ourselves seeing and choosing the result; or that which serves a like end unseen by us.¹⁶⁰

Here again we see Hinton's metaphysical conception at work. Some of our sacrifices and pains are serving ends beyond our ability to comprehend. Such suffering is the highest and perfect good.

These are our contribution to the redemption of the world, felt as painful because the source of a joy too great, which we make our own by freely yielding, and accepting them; thus making God's deed ours . . . We link our weakness with omnipotence; our blindness with omniscience. This is the privilege of the destitute, the sick, the feeble, of those who are thwarted and cast down, who cannot save themselves. Behold, to them too it is given to save others.¹⁶¹

One does not seek pain simply for the sake of pain. Hinton closes this chapter by noting that asceticism which devalues dimensions of human enjoyment does a disservice.

Human enjoyments also serve a good, and human "nature often expands and blossoms under it as under no other influence."¹⁶²

In the final chapter, Hinton ties off a few loose threads regarding a possible misunderstanding, a form of unconsidered pain, his metaphysical perspective, and the practical bearing of his writing. The misunderstanding that Hinton wants to avoid is the suggestion that he abandons traditional Protestant soteriology. He knows that the association of human pain with redemption will cause irritation for many, especially Protestants. He says, "It may, however, serve to guard against mistake, if I say that of

¹⁶⁰ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 107

¹⁶¹ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 109-110.

¹⁶² Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 112.

course no meritorious character is ascribed to human sufferings. Man's redemption is accomplished in them; not in any way by virtue of them."¹⁶³ He insists that other orthodox theological conceptions such as human sinfulness and Christ's work regarding sin are not at odds with his views about pain. An unconsidered form of pain that Hinton touches in the final chapter relates to sympathy pains. While Hinton does not explicitly discuss pains arising from sympathy earlier in the book, he admits that such pains are real and would fall within his understanding of pain. As a loose end, Hinton again returns to his metaphysical mantra to assure his readers of its veracity. He insists that his metaphysical perspective is in keeping with the most current and sound thinking in religion and science.

What better could the students of Nature and students of Humanity agree in telling us than this – their great lesson in these modern days – that the essence and meaning of all things is hidden from our natural sight? What is this but to echo back the words we have so familiarly heard from childhood upward, which bid us live as seeing the invisible, and walk, not by sight, but by faith? If this is the last lesson of science, it is also the first lesson of religion.¹⁶⁴

Finally, Hinton admits that he has not turned to the practical application of his thoughts about pain “partly because I feel incompetent, but more because I feel that it is not necessary.”¹⁶⁵ He believes that individuals will make their own application. The work concludes with a reflection on Christ's cry of dereliction from the cross, and how those who suffer participate in such suffering victory.

¹⁶³ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 115.

¹⁶⁴ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 117.

¹⁶⁵ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 118.

One can see, from our survey of Hinton's writings to this point in his life, the way in which his philosophical writing coalesced with his explorations in physiology to produce his perspective on pain. However, Hinton found that his writing career was not as lucrative as he had hoped. He found it necessary for financial reasons to return to medical practice.

D. Fourth Period (1863-1869): Exclusive Medical Practice

Financial pressures drove Hinton back to medical practice, beginning the fourth period of his life from 1863 to 1869. During this time, he exclusively devoted himself to the practice of medicine and completely ceased writing upon philosophical issues. Hinton describes this self-imposed exclusion from philosophical speculation as a period of hibernation.¹⁶⁶ However, his medical career was anything but torpid. In 1863, his colleagues at Guy's Hospital created a special position for him as Aural Surgeon, which he filled with distinction. In 1866 at the death of Joseph Toynbee, Hinton became the prominent aural authority in medicine. Toynbee's death was the result of a self-experimentation with chloroform to see if it would reduce tinnitus or ringing in the ears.¹⁶⁷ As Hinton had worked closely with Toynbee, he took over Toynbee's practice and saw to the republication of Toynbee's Diseases of the Ear.¹⁶⁸ Hinton, along with Toynbee and Sir William Wilde, father of Oscar Wilde, became "the founders of modern

¹⁶⁶ Hopkins, 229.

¹⁶⁷ Ray Porter, The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: A Medical History of Humanity (London: W.W. Norton & Co., 1998): 385.

¹⁶⁸ Joseph Toynbee, The Diseases of the Ear: Their Nature, Diagnosis, and Treatment. With a Supplement by James Hinton. London (London: H.K. Lewis, 1868).

otology.”¹⁶⁹ Hinton’s writing at this time was limited to medical papers,¹⁷⁰ and he was the “first Britain to make the cortical mastoidectomy.”¹⁷¹

While Hinton ceased writing philosophical works during this period, he yet released The Mystery of Pain for publication in 1866. The success of the publication linked with his successful medical practice ended Hinton’s financial troubles. An old acquaintance retells the change in a humorous way: “Only in one respect was he different from the James Hinton of my Charterhouse Square days. Instead of wearing seedy clothes, he was dressed like a prosperous gentleman.”¹⁷²

E. Fifth Period (1869-1775): Medical Writings and Speculation on Ethics

Having finally achieved an amount of success and financial security, Hinton began writing again in 1869. This final period of his life, from 1869-1875, was devoted to ongoing medical practice, the completion of several writings relating to the medical profession,¹⁷³ and creative ethical speculations in the form of personal manuscripts.

Hinton’s personal manuscripts became the fascination of his followers such as

¹⁶⁹ Penelope Hunting, The History of the Royal Society of Medicine (London: RSM Press, 2003): 90.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. James Hinton, “Sebaceous Tumour within the Tympanum” Guy’s Hospital Report 9, no. 3 (1863): 264-268; “On Accumulation of Mucus within the Tympanum, and Its treatment by Incision of the Membrana Tympani,” Guy’s Hospital Reports 14, no. 3 (1869): 149-164.

¹⁷¹ Hunting, History of the Royal Society of Medicine, 90.

¹⁷² John Cordy Jeaffreson, A Book of Recollections (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1894): 112.

¹⁷³ James Hinton, The Questions of Aural Surgery (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1874); The Surgical Disease of the Ear (London: J.R. Adlard, 1874); The Place of the Physician, Being the Introductory Lecture at Guy’s Hospital (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1874).

Havelock Ellis, the Victorian sexologist,¹⁷⁴ and his wife, Edith.¹⁷⁵ However, by Hinton's own admission, the manuscripts were not publishable because they reflected the frenzied nature of his thought.¹⁷⁶ Anne Summers believes that Hinton's manuscripts at the British Library should have a health warning:

I take my stand with Olive Schreiner, who thought that anyone who spent too long studying Hinton lost their reason, and I might yet insist on issuing them in the Manuscript Student's Room only with a health warning. It is with awe that one gazes on these reams of inchoate ramblings under such headings as Genius, Art, etc., (none of which seems to bear much relation to the matter beneath) and realizes that these are not Hinton's first thoughts, but as notes from his diaries, actually represent a mental process of selection, compression and arrangement. I have not been able to trace any links between them and Hinton's many non-medical publications, and to be honest, I have been unable to find any sense in them at all.¹⁷⁷

The frenzied nature of Hinton's manuscripts may be indicative of his declining mental health that we shall shortly consider as a contributing factor to Hinton's interest in pain in the next section of this chapter.

Hinton's health declined quickly. Stress, ill health in which he "needed absolute rest and quiet,"¹⁷⁸ and "sleeplessness and depression" marked Hinton's final years.¹⁷⁹ He

¹⁷⁴ Cf. Havelock Ellis, "Hinton's Later Thought," *Mind* 9, no. 35 (1884): 384 and 387. Ellis describes Hinton's earlier writings as immature but the ramblings in the manuscripts show the maturity of "flexibility, suggestiveness and delicate breath."

¹⁷⁵ Cf. Edith Havelock Ellis, *James Hinton: A Sketch* (London: Stanley Paul & Co., 1918).

¹⁷⁶ Hopkins, 368.

¹⁷⁷ Anne Summers, "The Correspondents of Havelock Ellis," *History Workshop* 32, no. 1 (1991): 170.

¹⁷⁸ Hopkins, 334.

had hoped to find some respite by retiring to the Azores, but shortly after arriving, he died on December 16, 1875, at St. Michael's of "acute inflammation of the brain."¹⁸⁰ Hinton's body now rests in the cemetery of the English Church of Ponta Delgada.¹⁸¹ We must briefly now consider four contributing factors from Hinton's life that relate to his understanding about pain.

III. Contributing Factors to Hinton's Interest in Pain

Hinton's experiences of pain produced his theological appropriation of pain. An examination of his life shows that he knew pain first hand in its emotional, physical, mental and societal manifestations. At the age of twelve, he lost his brother, Howard, to scarlet fever. When he was sixteen, his father sent him to work as a clerk in a wholesale woolen-drapery business in London's Whitechapel. Life in Whitechapel exposed Hinton to the seamy degradation of humanity including drunken husbands, domestic violence and prostitution. Hinton's experiences with pain were not limited to Whitechapel and his brother's death. He was a manic intellectual who would pursue a subject with such toil that his own health would suffer, and he regularly went through bouts of depression. His own mental health undoubtedly contributed to his understanding of pain. Medical practice also exposed Hinton to pain in a variety of forms. The methods employed by the health professions and their lack of the appreciation that one's emotional state played on health particularly distressed Hinton. As an individual accustomed to suffering in a variety of manifestations, Hinton had pondered the problem of pain until he produced

¹⁷⁹ Hopkins, 369.

¹⁸⁰ Hopkins, 370.

¹⁸¹ Ellis, James Hinton: A Sketch, 10.

The Mystery of Pain. We must now briefly explore these four contributing factors to Hinton's quest to understand pain: his brother's death, life in Whitechapel, his own mental health, and his ultimate skepticism regarding the state of medical knowledge.

A. The Death of Howard Hinton

The death of James' brother, Howard, sets the background for James' thinking on pain particularly as it relates to redemption. To understand the relationship of Howard's death to James' thinking on pain and redemption, we must remember that the occasion of Howard's death became the setting for James' religious conversion and baptism, most likely at the instigating of his father. The nature of such a conversion and its allied understanding of redemption, however, was something with which James subsequently began to have theological difficulty. We presently will consider the situation of Howard's death, the theological stance that it produced in the father, the resultant conversion and baptism of James, and how James later came to reject most of his father's thinking on redemption. In chapter two, we shall examine in detail what aspects of his father's understanding of redemption James rejected and what aspect he retained.

Scarlet fever broke out in the home of Rev. John Howard Hinton in early winter of 1834.¹⁸² The disease spread among the family members for three months. James preceded Howard in contracting the disease, but Howard's case was more severe and he succumbed to the disease after only a week of illness on January 10, 1835.¹⁸³ Pain,

¹⁸² John Howard Hinton, Memoir of J. Howard Hinton (London: Jackson and Walford, 1835), 64.

¹⁸³ John Howard Hinton, Memoir, 72.

dizziness and delirium marked the child's suffering; all the while, the family attended him with watchfulness, prayer and care.

As one can readily appreciate the impact that the death of a child makes upon the parents, Rev. John Howard Hinton reacted to his son's death by appealing to others to prepare for their own death. The overall thrust of his Memoir about his son is an admonishment to others to seek early their own spiritual safety and their children's spiritual welfare.¹⁸⁴ While the greater part of the Memoir retells young Howard's piety and belief in Jesus Christ's sacrifice, the hortatory nature of the composition becomes evident when the elder Hinton moves from Howard's spiritual welfare to the reader's welfare:

But whatever you mean to do in religion, do it in your health. Never reckon that an opportunity of repentance will be afforded you in your sickness . . . From the moment of his attack his head was so bad that he could attend to nothing, and within four-and-twenty hours incipient delirium so affected him, that he had great difficulty in fixing his thoughts in prayer. What could he have done, if he had had then to struggle with unsanctified passions, or to agonize under piercing conviction of sin? His parents were convinced that he could have done nothing; and that, if his soul had not been safe before his seizure, it must, in all probability, have been for ever lost. If you, my dear reader, should be sick before you die, it may be under similar circumstances. Is it not a dreadful thought, that the salvation of your soul from sin and hell should be left to such imminent hazard?¹⁸⁵

¹⁸⁴ John Howard Hinton, Memoir, 75ff.

¹⁸⁵ John Howard Hinton, Memoir, 85-87.

Thus, the elder Hinton sees his son's death as an opportunity to call others to spiritual preparedness.

Evidently, this calling to be prepared in things spiritual extended to the Hinton children. Hopkins reports that James made a religious commitment shortly after Howard's death: "Soon after, at his own wish, he was baptized, and made a public profession of religion in accordance with the usual practice among Baptists."¹⁸⁶ This profession of faith by James must have been a great consolation to the elder Hinton, a fulfilling of his prayer "of, perhaps, extended usefulness" in Howard's death.¹⁸⁷

However, James eventually grew to reject the notion that salvation depended on instantaneous decisions. He came to see such thinking as problematic and often cynically said,

Yes; if a cannonball hits a sinner on the head, he goes to hell for ever without a chance of mending; but if it had happened to hit him on the knee, he would have had a bad illness; and might have been converted, and finally saved. So everlasting perdition is a matter of measurement of an iron ball going a few feet higher or lower.¹⁸⁸

Breaking with his father's theology of redemption caused great stress for James. His emotional duress was so great that it eventually caused him to extend his stay in Jamaica as the surgeon for the emancipated slaves as a means of avoiding troubles at home due to

¹⁸⁶ Hopkins, 5.

¹⁸⁷ John Howard Hinton, Memoir, 74.

¹⁸⁸ Hopkins, 368.

his new religious opinions.¹⁸⁹ The theological point, which most frustrated James and threatened to bring down his inherited system of theology, was the dogma of perdition.

I am willing to give up any *à priori* arguments against revelation, at least, I think, I may say all, except my inability to receive that doctrine which condemns to eternal misery all who do not receive the Atonement; because that class comprehends not a few of the very best people – to all appearance – in the world.¹⁹⁰

We shall have occasion to examine Hinton's understanding of redemption at greater length in chapter two. For the time, let us simply emphasize that the death of his brother, the theological stance of his father, and James' inability to maintain such a theological position influenced James' thinking about the relationship of pain and redemption.

B. Hinton's Sojourn in Whitechapel

When he was fifteen or sixteen, James went to work as a clerk in a wholesale woolen-drapery business in London's Whitechapel. Life in Whitechapel exposed Hinton to the sordid squalor of drunken husbands, domestic violence and prostitution. He relates his sojourn in Whitechapel to his writing about pain when he says, "it crushed and crushed me till it crushed 'The Mystery of Pain' out of me."¹⁹¹ In many ways, Whitechapel became the invariable in James' thinking. He says, "At fifteen I walked about the streets and cried about these poor people, and now I am fifty I do just the same. How little I could have thought then of what I should be – that that fifteen would have

¹⁸⁹ Hopkins, 33.

¹⁹⁰ Hopkins, 35.

¹⁹¹ Hopkins, 8.

come to this fifty!”¹⁹² Sojourning in Whitechapel forged Hinton’s thinking about ethics which were a form of altruism based on service to others.

But on these points I fancy my thoughts are a little influenced by my own particular experience. I have ever since I lived in Whitechapel – for it was that that did it – desired service, and acted for it – desired with a desire that has no second, no second even in the sum of all other desires I have ever had, that the world should be better.¹⁹³

It was seeing the impoverishment of women in Whitechapel that set Hinton to support the then novel and radical idea that women should have their own careers so as not to depend on men. Hopkins summarizes Hinton’s experience of the degradation of women when she says,

On Saturday nights, in the back streets and crowded courts of Whitechapel, he used to hear women screaming under the blows of their drunken husbands; and come across others, wearing the same sacred womanhood as his own mother and sisters, with the same gracious dependence on man’s strength and care, yet the victims of his passions, flushed with gin and trolling out obscenities. He got a sense of the cruelty of the world, and it got into him and possessed him, and never left him.¹⁹⁴

The plight of women in Victorian society led James to insist that girls, like boys, should be taught some profession.¹⁹⁵ To this end, Hinton published a pamphlet on “Nursing as a Profession” in 1869¹⁹⁶ and was part of the doctor-driven reform of nursing in London.¹⁹⁷

¹⁹² Hopkins, 296.

¹⁹³ Hopkins, 307.

¹⁹⁴ Hopkins, 8.

¹⁹⁵ Hopkins, 255.

¹⁹⁶ Hopkins, 255.

What was it about Whitechapel that made such an indelible mark on Hinton? Publications about Whitechapel from around the time of Hinton's sojourn in East London describe the underbelly of Victorian society. We shall briefly consider two authors' descriptions of Whitechapel and the statistical evidence from the police statistics to reveal something of the Whitechapel that James experienced.

Authors writing about Whitechapel in Hinton's era reveal the worst of Victorian culture. We shall briefly consider the descriptions of two journalists, Charles Mansby Smith and Henry Mayhew, to see the stark contrast in their depiction of Whitechapel with what we have already seen of James' experience growing up as a Baptist minister's child. Whitechapel was a ghetto where two types of people often landed: immigrants seeking opportunity and the desolate eking out an existence. The portrait of Whitechapel that one gets from Smith and Mayhew reveals the opportunism, poverty, prostitution and degradation of a slum life in Victorian society.

Smith's description of the sporting entertainments of the area reveals the degradation and opportunism that poverty ignites. He reports in the following way:

The purlieus of Whitechapel and some other districts of London are yet disgraced by the disgustingly-cruel and senseless exhibitions of dog-fights, badger-baitings, and rat-slaughters; in which latter spectacle of barbarity certain wretches in human shape, envious of the reputation of the celebrated dog Billy, have aspired to emulate his exploits, and are actually seen to enter the arena with a hundred or more live rats, which they are backed, or back themselves, to kill with their teeth alone in a given time!

¹⁹⁷ On nursing reform see Carol Helmstadter's "Early Nursing Reform in Nineteenth-Century London: A Doctor-Driven Phenomenon," *Medical History* 46, no. 3 (2002): 325-350.

The cockpit, too, yet survives, and mains are fought in secret and out of ear-shot of the Society for the Suppression of Cruelty to Animals.¹⁹⁸

Mayhew, citing the experience of an individual who lived in one of Whitechapel's lodging houses, gives an account of the living conditions and reveals the poverty, degradation and subsequent prostitution in Whitechapel.

I have slept in a room in Brick-lane, Whitechapel, in which were fourteen beds. In the next bed to me, on the one side, was a man, his wife, and three children, and man and his wife on the other. They were Irish people, and I believe the women were the men's wives – as the Irish women generally are. Of all the women that resort to these places the Irish are far the best for chastity.¹⁹⁹

Despite the virtue of the Irish Immigrants, immorality abounded in these lodging houses.

Poverty drove many young women to prostitution. Mayhew continues:

All the beds were occupied, single men being mixed with the couples of the two sexes. The question is never asked, when a man and woman go to a lodging-house, if they are man and wife. All must pay before they go to bed, or be turned into the street . . . The people who slept in the room I am describing were chiefly young men, almost all accompanied by young females. I have seen girls of fifteen with youths of from sixteen to twenty. There is no objection to any boy and girl occupying a bed, even though the keeper knows they were previously strangers to each other . . . It is not uncommon for a boy or man to take a girl out of the streets to these apartments. Some are the same as common brothels, women being taken

¹⁹⁸ Charles Manby Smith, Curiosities of London Life, or Phases, Physiological and Social of the Great Metropolis (London: Frank Cass and Company, 1972 Reprint), 309.

¹⁹⁹ Henry Mayhew, London Labor and the London Poor Volume I (London: Griffin, Bohn, and Company, 1861), 408-409. For more on Mayhew see Anne Humphreys' Travels Into the Poor Man's Country: The Work of Henry Mayhew (Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press, 1977).

in at all hours of the day or night. In most, however, they must stay all night as a married couple.²⁰⁰

The conditions of the lodging houses were deplorable and unsanitary.

These beds were made – as all the low lodging-house beds are – of the worst cotton flocks stuffed in coarse, strong canvas. There is a pair of sheets, a blanket, and a rug. I have known the bedding to be unchanged for three months, but that is not general. The beds are an average size. Dirt is the rule with them, and the cleanliness the exception . . . A pail in the middle of the room, to which both sexes may resort, is a frequent arrangement. No delicacy or decency is ever observed.²⁰¹

Mayhew describes the residents of such facilities as the worst of society:

They are the ready resort of thieves and all bad characters, and the keepers will hide them if they can from the police, or facilitate any criminal's escape. I never knew the keepers give any offender up, even when rewards were offered. If they did, they might shut up shop. These houses are but receptacles, with a few exceptions, for beggars, thieves, and prostitutes, and those *in training* for thieves and prostitutes . . . Fights, and fierce fights too, are frequent in them, and I have often been afraid murder would be done.²⁰²

Statistical information from the period tends to support Mayhew's claims of rampant criminal activities. The population of the Whitechapel district was reported by the

²⁰⁰ Mayhew, London Labor and the London Poor Volume I, 408-409.

²⁰¹ Henry Mayhew, London Labor and the London Poor Volume I, 409.

²⁰² Henry Mayhew, London Labor and the London Poor Volume I, 409.

District Superintendent at 71,765 in 1841.²⁰³ The crime rate of Whitechapel was alarming. The police reports for 1837 characterize the region of Whitechapel as one where “highway robberies, burglaries, house and shop-breaking” had occurred most frequently in the metropolitan area.²⁰⁴ The lodging houses described above were the setting for the most numerous larcenies in the metropolis, and the district held the distinction for the most murders and embezzlements.²⁰⁵ With such statistics, it is not surprising that Whitechapel also reported the highest number of repeat offenders for felonies.²⁰⁶

Hinton’s experience of Whitechapel created in him a great care for the ills of society. As Hopkins points out, “He got a sense of the cruelty of the world, and it got into him and possessed him, and never left him. It became the “unconscious constant” in all his thinking; he could think of nothing apart from this.”²⁰⁷ Hinton stood at odds with Victorian culture’s emphasis on individual morality because his sojourn in Whitechapel caused him to see that Victorian society itself generated much of the moral evil that led individuals to act badly. In emphasizing the individual, Hinton realized that Victorian culture ignored both the interconnectivity of society and the structural impact of individuals acting for their own interests. This error of his time often left Hinton in a rage of anger and ultimately led to his adopting an altruistic ethic based on service to others.

²⁰³ R.W. Rawson, “Miscellaneous,” Journal of the Statistical Society of London 6, no. 2 (May, 1843): 180.

²⁰⁴ R.W. Rawson, “Police of the Metropolis,” Journal of the Statistical Society of London 1, no. 2 (June, 1838): 97.

²⁰⁵ Rawson, “Police of the Metropolis,” 97.

²⁰⁶ Rawson, “Police of the Metropolis,” 100.

²⁰⁷ Hopkins, 8.

But most often this passion of anger would come upon him while reading in the police reports of the crime and punishment of some poor outcast of society, abandoned by the selfish rights of our so-called Christian civilization to every evil influence, born and bred in circumstances which make a virtue a name, and a vice a necessity, and then, when degradation has borne its legitimate fruit of crime, ruthlessly punished and crushed by the society that has denied him the social conditions for better things.²⁰⁸

His altruistic ethic touches on his understanding of pain because Hinton emphasized service to others. As a young man, he found himself thinking and grieving “for hours in secret over the evils which the vices of much more agreeable people than himself have inflicted on mankind” and “longed to make himself a sacrifice to cancel” the evils inflicted on society.²⁰⁹ In his writing on pain, Hinton thought that to recognize one’s pain as a sacrifice for humanity would transform its perception.

C. Hinton’s Mental Health

Hinton by his own admission suffered from depression and an uncontrollable compulsion to think. As I have researched Hinton’s life, I have become aware that his own mental health contributed to his concern about human suffering and pain. In what follows, I have collected incidents and statements from Hinton’s letters and writings with some evaluations of his biographer, Ellice Hopkins, to illustrate Hinton’s mental health. These snippets from his letters reflect what Hinton himself admitted were episodes of depression manifesting as a tendency to be overly self-critical and despondent and an obsessive tendency that manifested itself in his thinking about the world and its evils to the point of adversely affecting his health. A medical diagnosis of Hinton’s mental

²⁰⁸ Hopkins, 322

²⁰⁹ Hopkins, 50

health is unnecessary because our task is simply to show what Hinton observed about himself and what his biographer noted. Hinton's mental health is relevant for our consideration on two levels:²¹⁰ First, an understanding of his emotional struggles contributes to an appreciation of why Hinton's career vacillated between writing and medicine. Second, Hinton's struggle with his own mental health contributed to his understanding of the relationship of faith, medicine and pain. We will further explicate this second consideration as we examine Hinton's practice and skepticism of medicine in the next section.

The earliest signs of health troubles arise around the time of Hinton's sojourn in Whitechapel where Hinton's practice of self-imposed study began to affect his health. Hopkins describes his practice of study accordingly: "So consuming was his thirst of knowledge, and so great the practical difficulties in gratifying it, that at one time it was his habit to study all Saturday night and all Monday night, with the intermission only of a few snatches of sleep."²¹¹ She summarizes the health effects of such study combined with living in Whitechapel as significant enough to cause Hinton's father to consult the family physician.

Meanwhile the double strain upon him of intense intellectual toil, and, what was far worse, the sense of the wrongs and degradation of women, was telling upon his health and spirits, and became so intolerable that he resolved to run away to sea, and fly from the thoughts he could no longer

²¹⁰ As Thomas A. Kohut says in "Psychohistory as History," "From the point of view of historical scholarship, information about the personal life of a historical figure should only be presented if that information either directly or indirectly has relevance for the understanding of his historical significance" (American Historical Review 91, no. 2 (1986): 341).

²¹¹ Ellice Hopkins, ed. Life and Letters of James Hinton (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1883): 9.

bear. His intention was, however, discovered, and increased illness made it doubly impossible to carry it out. His father, now seriously anxious about him, consulted the family doctor with regard to him. “The lad wants more mental occupation to keep his mind from feeding on itself,” was the doctor’s sensible verdict. He accordingly advised his entering the medical profession, as giving the necessary scope to his mental activity. This advice, accompanied by some kind practical help, was at once acted on, and he entered at St. Bartholomew’s Hospital, having just reached his twentieth year.²¹²

The severity of Hinton’s illness is mentioned by him in a letter to his wife in which he recounts that he had “once upon a time gravely conceived the plan of shortening my life” through starvation.²¹³

Throughout his life, Hinton seems to have gone through repeated episodes of intense mental activity followed by depression and self-critical feelings. Having proposed marriage to Margaret Haddon, he writes to her in April 1850, “My old feelings of despondency have come very near taking possession of me again; but I won’t let them.”²¹⁴ In December of the same year, he warns her to watch her own health.

You know, I am naturally anxious about health, because I know how apt good people like yourself are to let themselves be over-excited until their strength is exhausted, and the occupations of life become a burden to them . . . I have a right to speak on this subject. I am myself an instance of it. I labor now under, and shall always, I fear, retain, an irritability of temper caused absolutely and only by my foolish trifling with my health in

²¹² Hopkins, 14.

²¹³ Hopkins, 162.

²¹⁴ Hopkins, 37

bygone days, when I used to waste the time necessary for sleep in abortive efforts to study.²¹⁵

Already by August 1851, another letter to Margaret reveals Hinton's state of agitation and self-criticism in relation to his study of physiology and ethics.

I confess, with feelings of the deepest mortification, that I hold myself to be a fool, with more blindness than can be attributed to any three beetles. I am ready every now and then to throw down my pen in sheer disgust at my own incapacity. It takes me weeks and months to find out the plainest, simplest things . . . I am a fool, as I said before. I have been diving into the abstrusest profundities of physiology, and mounting into the highest abstractions of morals, to find evidence of this fact, shutting my eyes to it all the while. Ten or twelve times during my recent investigations I have had the conviction brought painfully to my mind that I deserve a good whipping for my stupidity. I could wish there were some one here to give me one now.²¹⁶

In several letters to an unnamed friend who was traveling abroad, Hinton sees in his friend a need for rest from perpetual thought because the burden of such work was taking its toll upon the friend's outlook. Each time that Hinton warns his friend, he refers to his own tendency.

To speak quite plainly, I think you are tired and not well. Your letter, and all your trying thoughts, simply mean that your brain is fagged. You must leave off thinking for a time, and distract and amuse yourself in any way most accessible, especially out of doors. Everybody needs it. I can bear a

²¹⁵ Hopkins, 55.

²¹⁶ Hopkins, 70-71

good deal of thinking, but I get into just such a way if I go on too long, and I have been practicing my own prescription.²¹⁷

Again, Hinton writing to the same friend says,

When I'm done up I'm haunted by the most painful conviction of my indolence, that I've never done anything, nor shall do, and that I don't half work. You have had like me a perpetual tax on your mind, an unintermittent one, that's what we can't stand. You must put it aside for a time, and then see . . . for so continual and unvaried was my sense of utter failure and inability, that if I attached importance to it, it would have been a bar to my doing anything, and especially anything in those lines in which, as a matter of fact, I succeed about the best. It is very curious, and there is something I should like uncommonly to understand in this causing of untrue feeling through great exertion; but it is certainly a fact, and you should thoroughly recognize it, for both by nature and your position you are likely to be a good deal tried by it. It affects reflective natures like yours and mine more than some others. It is, besides, especially prone to occur to those whose minds are subject to constant wear and effort.²¹⁸

About the time of Hinton's publication of Man and His Dwelling-Place in 1859, he discusses his preoccupation to think in a letter to his sister-in-law, Caroline Haddon. Hinton admits that his thinking is an inescapable compulsion, and he plans to leave medical practice to give vent to the desire to think. In this way, he believes that he shall find control over his compulsion.

I am under an inexorable fate to think; could not escape it if I tried or wished ever so much. And then, besides, I know also that deep at the

²¹⁷ Hopkins, 146.

²¹⁸ Hopkins, 151-153.

bottom I do not wish, and never shall wish. It is not a passion – perhaps it used to be so; it is deeper than a passion. It is independent of pleasure and success. I could conceive it growing into a raging torture or a madness; but I think it will develop itself healthily and genially, especially if my external life succeeds, as I think it will. I know I am doing in the main the right thing. Crushed and fettered my impulses might blast my life; but allowed to expand in natural activity, with varied and sufficient occupation, I think I may live a life most men might envy.²¹⁹

An enviable life was not to be for Hinton. His nonstop thinking did not allow time for composition, and financial pressures drove him back to medical practice in 1863. He writes his wife at this time, “I haven’t had a good week, and have been very miserable on Sunday.”²²⁰ After switching homes and moving his family out of London because of the health of his eldest son in 1864, Hinton found some solace in his weekends spent with his family. He writes a friend,

I have arrived at that stage in which I can thoroughly enter into feeling – almost it is my own for the time – that my notions, though really rather clever, are the merest moonshine, no more likely to be true than that cats should walk on their tails; and that to trouble our selves about anything of the sort is pure absurdity. Why should a man go into fits about the world? Or what good is likely to come of it if he does? . . . But between this frame of mind and that which was mine lie dreadful torments.²²¹

However, his depression was persistent. In September of 1865 to another friend, he writes,

²¹⁹ Hopkins, 185.

²²⁰ Hopkins, 200.

²²¹ Hopkins, 207.

Try to come and see me soon; I should so much enjoy it. Your quickened sensibilities from your recent illness and your present loss would make your conversation and sympathy still more valuable and delightful to me than they always are. And I need some one to do me a little good. I have been dreadfully crushed down and cramped and deadened lately, and don't know how to raise myself up. Come and give me a lift. I am very glad I have you for a friend.²²²

But to his wife in November of 1865, he says, "I was already free from my depression so that I did not care so much about my own affairs" (Hopkins, 209). Hinton found his pecuniary cares resolved when Dr. Toynbee, a friend and colleague, suddenly passed away. He inherited Toynbee's practice at Savile Row and became the leading aural surgeon in the region. His biographer reports that "his own wish seemed realized for a time, the terrible keenness of the thinking faculty in him was blunted down into a kindly implement of healing" (Hopkins, 217). However, what Hopkins calls a blunting, Hinton describes as hibernating to a friend. His full-time commitment to the practice of medicine with a complete cessation from writing made Hinton feel like a hibernating animal. He speaks of this time in dire language that bespeaks his state of depression:

Yes! There is one way, I hibernate. By the by, there's quite a new light on physiology here. I am a hibernating animal. A wintry torpor has fallen on me; that is all; a kind of living freezing, wherein there exists just vitality enough to keep one going till spring. I feel a new sympathy with dormice and hedgehogs, and every kind of hibernating animal. I know their sensations, especially how disgusted they feel with themselves.

Still there is promise of a spring, perhaps even for me; and God made me, I suppose, with the capacity of cherishing deep inside a life debarred from

²²² Hopkins, 209.

other manifestation. Has he not made others so – nay, all? But don't you know that if you rashly touch a hibernating animal, it falls into a fever and may die? Beware, therefore, how you touch me.²²³

Hinton's self-imposed hibernation ended in 1869. He allowed himself the opportunity again to begin writing and thinking about moral problems. Hopkins says, "From this time his brain was in a state of tension, which could not but prove fatally injurious in the end" (Hopkins, 249). At times, Hinton's ethical ramblings, which were a rejection of utilitarianism for altruism, take on the quality of lament. His burden for humanity was becoming more destructive to himself.

O my God! Can it be true that the end is not come? Didst Thou bring me hither only to torture and delude me? Yet, as Thou knowest, the torture is welcome, and I am willing even to be deluded; for if I see not then Thy will is better than my vision. But let my strained eyes close, at rest. They cannot look longer if hope is vanished. Let the world's evil run its course uncheered by one gleam of hope, but let me cease to witness it. Even so. It is good, but I have borne enough.²²⁴

His life as a medical practitioner combined with his moral concern for the plight of society began to show signs of strain upon him, and in 1872, he determined to leave medical practice again. He tells Margaret in a letter, "Oh, it would make me so quiet, and I see I shall not be violent and angry any more" (Hopkins, 320). Hopkins comments on Hinton's anger in the following way:

The rage he speaks of was in part due to the state of nervous tension he was in, so little realized by those who took offence at some of the excited

²²³ Hopkins, 229.

²²⁴ Hopkins, 284.

things it led him to say and do. But in part it was natural to him, the intensity his nature being nowhere more strongly displayed than in the force of his indignation. His face would blanch and every fiber of his frame quiver with a passion which, when over, left him utterly spent and exhausted. But it never vented itself on individuals; only on false principles, and on the goodness that is so busy taking care of itself that it has no time to think of others.²²⁵

Hinton was amazed that very few saw the societal significance of Victorian civilization's individual morality. He finally was able to retire from medical practice in March 1874. However, the strain may have been too much. In November of the same year, a letter to his sister-in-law again sounds like a lament. He writes as a dejected prophet or seer whose warnings are unheeded. His emotional despondency is unmistakable:

Oh me! It is a vision to have seen. But it won't let one go one's own way, nor avoid being a fool, nor be a person one can like, nor help giving perpetual pain. I shall be a dream or a vision people will think of with love; but I shall never be liked as a man, not by those who know me. Nature has taken me and used me, and she is welcome; but she ought to let me perish. What do I want to go on living for? I, who am but a power of seeing, having stripped myself of all else to purchase it, am already of the past. A sight is in having been.²²⁶

Those who knew him thought that his dejectedness was due to overwork. Hopkins says, "Several times when he was with me he complained of having suffered from sleeplessness and depression, but knowing the severe strain that had been on him, it did

²²⁵ Hopkins, 321.

²²⁶ Hopkins, 347.

not excite any apprehension in my mind.”²²⁷ In the two years preceding his retirement from medical practice, he published at least six works and wrote a large quantity of unpublished manuscripts.²²⁸ Hinton had purchased property in the Azores, and having sent Margaret ahead, he set sail for St. Michaels in 1875. When Hinton arrived to discover that his property was not what he expected, his melancholy deepened. His last letters reflect discontent with his financial situation and a sense of failure:

It is so sad to me that I have lost the power of helping those who need worldly aid . . . But now how I feel the trial it is not to have means to help . . . all my soul seems thrown into doubt.²²⁹

I have tried for too much, and failed; but yet perhaps in that, my failure, God is giving me more even than I tried for. He has opened my eyes, at least a little, though I am blind and foolish still, no doubt.²³⁰

But, how, there is a wrong, an intense wrong, in our society running all through our life, and it will be made righter some day. I dashed myself against it; but it is not one man’s strength that can move it. It was too much for my brain . . . We have not come to the end; though I am so exhausted, that I seem scarcely able to believe in anything more before me.²³¹

²²⁷ Hopkins, 368-369.

²²⁸ Hopkins, 331.

²²⁹ Hopkins, 369.

²³⁰ Hopkins, 369-370

²³¹ Hopkins, 370.

In December 1875, at the age of fifty-three, Hinton grew gravely ill. Hopkins says that he suffered from “acute inflammation of the brain.”²³² After a few days of intense pain in which he recognized no one, he died on December 16, 1874.

Our collection of his letters and biographer’s statements reveals that Hinton throughout his life seems to have gone through repeated episodes of intense mental activity followed by depression. We are aware of at least one thwarted suicide attempt in his mention of starvation. I am not attempting to make a medical diagnosis of Hinton’s mental illness. We are simply recognizing what he said about himself and what his biographer noted. As we shall see in our consideration of his practice of medicine and his skepticism toward the state of medical knowledge, Hinton was highly concerned for those who suffered from emotional problems. Undoubtedly, this concern arose from his personal struggles with depression.

D. Hinton’s Practice and Skepticism of Medicine

Hinton’s practice of medicine influenced his thinking about pain. We must remember that his entrance into the profession was due to his own ill health. Despite the tremendous advances in medicine during Hinton’s life, he developed a regular skepticism of medicine. Such skepticism was common. “Sir Benjamin Brodie, former President of the Royal College of Surgeons, acknowledged in 1861 that, ‘if the arts of medicine and surgery had never been invented, by far the greater number of those who suffer from bodily illness would have recovered nevertheless.’”²³³ Hinton’s cynicism set him on a

²³² Hopkins, 370.

²³³ M. Jeanne Peterson, The Medical Profession in Mid-Victorian London (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1978): 130.

search to discover the underlying basis for effective medical practice. In what follows, we shall briefly explore Hinton's cynicism, examine his own thinking about the nature of human recovery from illness, and examine Hinton's concern for the role that emotions play in health and illness.

Hinton was an inveterate medical cynic throughout his life, despite his occupation as a surgeon. In 1863, he described the rendering of medical services as "questionable" because of his "inveterate medical cynicism."²³⁴ Hinton disliked the tendency of practitioners "putting down things as if you knew all about them, when you know quite well that they are as doubtful as possible."²³⁵ Christopher Lawrence points out that Victorian medicine "was extremely variegated in its attitudes, goals and standards, and especially in its definition, evaluation and use of science."²³⁶ The various views of medicine with each claiming significant results proved to Hinton that some explanation of human healing had to exist and be at work despite the individual schools. He suspected that medical practice hindered healing as often as not: "Nature has wonderful remedial powers which can't work while she is being interfered with . . . I have seen many an obstinate case of disease improve wonderfully upon being let alone."²³⁷ In 1851, Hinton began regularly to visit the Homoeopathic Hospital to discover if the practice of homoeopathy was true. The uncertainty of medicine was frustrating him, and he speculated how splendid it would be to be free from such uncertainty:

²³⁴ Hopkins, 202.

²³⁵ Hopkins, 309.

²³⁶ Christopher Lawrence, "Incommunicable Knowledge: Science, Technology and the Clinical Art in Britain 1850-1914," *Journal of Contemporary History* 20, no. 4 (1985): 503.

²³⁷ Hopkins, 57.

Only fancy what a splendid thing it is to feel that one has discovered the truth of medicine, that one may give over doubt, inquiry, and toil; that one always must be right, and never can have the responsibility of deciding between various modes of treatment, and choosing not only a good one, but the best; and after all, the consolatory reflection that whatsoever happens, there can be no fault on our part, that failure can be due only to inexorable fate.²³⁸

Hinton grew to scorn many of the new theories associated with the healing arts. He came to believe that mesmerism, electro-biology and homoeopathy were “nonsense.”²³⁹

From his encounter with homeopathy, Hinton came to believe that serious thought needed to be focused on the way that the emotions effect health. He hypothesized that “taking medicine produced emotion, and emotion is a physical power.”²⁴⁰ He found anecdotal evidence for his speculation in medical stories that he recounted to his fiancée, Margaret Haddon:

Twenty years ago a doctor was walking through a field of peas. He took a few in his hand, and as he meditated he rolled them between his fingers. While thus engaged he passed by a house where lived a women deranged in health. She thought if the doctor was rolling anything in his hand it must be a pill, and asked him to give her some, for she had taken much medicine and could get no better. He gave her two peas; she took them; the next day he called and found that they had cured her . . . And what did he do then? He was amused and laughed. He told the story in joke to a friend. O vain and foolish man! Did not God then take his hand and lay it on a precious fact, embodying a law precious beyond its worth of

²³⁸ Hopkins, 59.

²³⁹ Hopkins, 61.

²⁴⁰ Hopkins, 83-84.

diamonds, and say to him, “Discover me that law – collect more facts – investigate them patiently and it shall not be hid from you, and then proclaim it to your fellows! Unfortunate wretch that he was! He knew too much.”²⁴¹

Hinton came to believe that one could explain such cases of healing by the power of the emotions and their ability to cause inflammation.

I’ll tell you why women were made to blush. It is that I might discover by means of it how it is that anything that acts on the emotions will cause and cure diseases. I thought of that to-day in chapel.

I think the matter is so plain that I can explain it to you in a very few words. It is as plain as the reason why water rises in a pump, viz., that the air presses it; but that was mysterious while people didn’t know that the air had any weight, as it is now how an infinitesimal dose should cure a disease, the mystery being simply that people haven’t yet discovered that the “emotions” have weight. I’ll give you first the general principle, and then an illustration, and so you shall have the essence of the matter in a nut-shell. The principle is this: All the emotions produce a specific effect upon the small vessels, capillaries as they are called, which is seen in the face when people blush; the vessels become relaxed and full of blood, and the face is red. All the exciting and most pleasurable emotions relax the capillaries; all depressing emotions, on the contrary, contract these vessels, which also is seen in the face when a man turns pale with fear. He is pale because the minute vessels don’t contain so much blood.

Now the same effect that takes place on the surface of the body takes place in the inside too; in fact, it may take place in any and every part, and sometimes it does.

This seems very little, but it is almost as vast as the whole range of human suffering; for relaxation and contraction of the capillaries is the

²⁴¹ Hopkins, 61.

essence of disease. It is inflammation, it is morbid deposit, it is pain; etc. Thus, you perceive, we see daily before our eyes emotion setting on foot those processes which constitute disease, and which also (for here is the point) constitute cure.

Now, it has been from want of a due appreciation of this fact that the medical world has been at a loss, and several of them have come to believe that infinitesimal doses will cure the greatest disease.

. . . Suppose we excite hope; is not the thing done? – that is to say, give the patient a globule. I think it would cure him. If it won't, my theory is wrong – but I don't think it is, because a spoonful of water will cure.²⁴²

Thus, Hinton came to believe that emotions contribute and even cause recovery from illness.

Between May and September of 1851, Hinton began looking for evidence of his hypothesis that emotion acts on the body to cause healing. The nature of his evidence was anecdotal. He reports instances of cures in which he or an associate gave water or sugar of milk to patients who subsequently got better. He attributed the cure to the patients' belief in the efficacy of the medicine. On one occasion, he treated a Baptist minister with spirits of wine in place of a homoeopathic drug with remarkable success.

We have had staying with us a Baptist minister from Hamburg, a Mr. K---. He is a homoeopathist, and subject to attacks resembling asthma which very much incommode him. He usually takes the tincture of phosphorus which he was very anxious to get, as he suffers in a very trying way. I got him a bottle, poured out the tincture, and filled it with spirits of wine. He

²⁴² Hopkins, 62-64.

had some doubts of me, but that didn't prevent the action, for he had no asthma after he began taking it.²⁴³

In a subsequent encounter with the Baptist minister, Hinton discovered that he had remained cured.

The German minister to whom I gave sham phosphorous has been here today. He has had no more attacks, and I suggested that it might be due to the effect on the mind. He won't hear of it; he is satisfied the phosphorous has cured him homeopathically, though he admits the possibility that he might have been well without. Isn't it very interesting? I haven't told him, because father thinks it would hurt his moral sense to find me guilty of such deception.²⁴⁴

Undoubtedly, Hinton took aspects of proving his theory to extremes. His conviction also led him astray at times. He came to believe that children should not be discouraged from crying because tears were produced by sad emotions that blocked the cutaneous vessels that secreted perspiration. Thus, according to Hinton, tears are the body's compensating action to release harmful perspiration. On this basis, Hinton thought that it was wrong and injurious to tell children not to cry.²⁴⁵

However, as a thinker looking for a comprehensive understanding of the role of medicine in healing, he recognized that his understanding of the role of the emotions in curing sickness went a long way in explaining the diverse history of medicine and healing. From modern allopaths and homoeopaths to those who cured "with charms and incantations," their individual results came from the same efficacious hope that the

²⁴³ Hopkins, 90.

²⁴⁴ Hopkins, 91-92.

²⁴⁵ Hopkins, 66.

patient brought to the situation.²⁴⁶ Hinton also explained the miracles of the Irvingites and Mormons on the same basis of emotion affecting the body physically to produce a cure.²⁴⁷

Already by September of 1851, Hinton was drawing the conclusion that religious belief could contribute to an individual's wellbeing.

I have had lately to try and comfort two or three people in distress of mind, and have been very much struck with the impossibility there is of giving any real consolation and encouragement except that which arises from religion and is embodied in the Gospel. How useless it is to tell the desponding of any hope except that which is to be found in God, the friendless of any love but their Maker's, or those distressed by consciousness of guilt of any remedy but a Saviour's blood.²⁴⁸

For Hinton, where medicine became powerless, religion still held out possibilities. He came to believe that religious hope and emotional cures were the final solace for those beyond current medicine's abilities. This led Hinton to begin setting some parameters on emotional cures within the context of the medical arts. "I am less and less disposed to regard it as a proper and desirable way of curing disease. It is a way, a necessary way sometimes, but not (as I think) the right way."²⁴⁹ Thus, when medicine failed to produce a cure, religious belief or emotional cures could become a necessary means of healing. To his future wife, who was practicing homoeopathy in Dover, but had come to accept

²⁴⁶ Hopkins, 66.

²⁴⁷ Hopkins, 67.

²⁴⁸ Hopkins, 89-90.

²⁴⁹ Hopkins, 92.

James' thinking about homoeopathy, he gives what could stand as three rules for practicing emotional cures.

I am satisfied there are some people in Dover who might go the round of all the doctors in the town and get no benefit, upon whom a few of your globules would act 'like (what they are in truth) a charm.' After a little while, perhaps, you might find them out. If you will adopt one or two rules, you might act a merciful part, and really elicit some valuable facts, without incurring any troublesome responsibility or anxiety. First, never give your globules to any one who would otherwise adopt any judicious means of cure. Second, never give away more than one or two doses at a time, so that injurious delay may not be incurred. Third, keep a special look-out for cases 'given over by the doctors.' It is from that class that you will obtain your striking cures.²⁵⁰

Hinton described his understanding of the role of emotions in healing as "the cure of disease by imagination,"²⁵¹ and "a feeling in the mind curing disease."²⁵² Throughout his medical career, Hinton never abandoned his belief that the emotions and the mind play an important role in health. In his lecture to medical students, just before his retirement, he emphasizes the need for the physician to understand the mind as well as the body:

It is not the physical world alone that the physician has to explore to its utmost bounds; the other world of the human mind and its emotions no less claims his study. Not only those among you who will devote yourselves to the treatment of mental disease will be called upon to trace out the mutual workings of mind and body, and note, with utmost delicacy you can attain, the point at which a bodily disorder begins to react on the

²⁵⁰ Hopkins, 93.

²⁵¹ Hopkins, 101.

²⁵² Hopkins, 93.

emotions; or when a mental shock or strain, or worry too much succumbed to, reveals itself in impaired functions of the body; this is the common duty of us all, and one which daily acquires a greater urgency.²⁵³

He continues in the lecture to emphasize both his skepticism of medicine and his belief in the role of emotions for health:

More than ever now the physician must have knowledge of the soul; must feel, with finer senses, other pulses; and measure heats and chills which no thermometer can gauge. The mind, the passions, are his study; unwitting of these, or unregardful, half his work – often the larger half – is unperformed. Calm himself, he must for his fellow know ambition and despair; must feel how fiercely burns desire, and with what a leaden weight failure seals up the springs of life. He must enter into the depths of another man's remorse, or how can he know how it corrodes the frame, and turns even the healing waters to bitterness? And his soul, too, must thrill with another's joy, lest he ascribe fancied powers to his drugs, and turn the very gladness of one man to the mortal damage of another. For who will tell us how much medicine has suffered by false virtues ascribed to remedies, because, perhaps, the doctor has wrapped up hope with his pills, or a sudden gladness has seemed to make an ordinary draught a very cup of life?²⁵⁴

Undoubtedly, Hinton's work as Aural Surgeon at Guy's Hospital was a setting that must have deepened his concern for pain and suffering. The statistics from the time when Hinton began his work at the hospital are alarming. Guy's hospital was the second

²⁵³ James Hinton, The Place of the Physician: Being the Introductory Lecture at Guy's Hospital (London: Henry S. King & Co., 1874): 7.

²⁵⁴ Hinton, Place of the Physician, 8f.

largest metropolitan hospital with 5,005 admittances in 1863.²⁵⁵ The overall mean stay of a patient was 33 days, and the overall mortality rate was 9.7 percent.²⁵⁶ Ever a person sensitized by his surroundings, Hinton developed a great concern for the plight of those who suffer.

Conclusion

In this chapter, we have explored Hinton's life and writings to situate his thinking on pain at the level of his own personal experience. Four factors from his life significantly contribute to his understanding of pain in a personal way. His brother's death, his experience of Whitechapel, his own mental health, and the state of medicine in the mid nineteenth century profoundly influenced Hinton to think about pain. In the next chapter, we will examine Hinton's theology of pain in light of the Judeo- Christian tradition to explore its validity and to see how the tradition might enrich Hinton's theological position.

²⁵⁵ Frederick Purdy, "Statistics of Metropolitan and Provincial General Hospitals for 1863," Journal of the Statistical Society of London 28, No. 4 (Dec., 1865): 528 of 527-535.

²⁵⁶ Purdy, 530.

CHAPTER TWO

THE REDEMPTIVE NEXUS: SUFFERING, BENEFICENCE AND DEIFICATION

Hinton's redemptive understanding of suffering in The Mystery of Pain revolves around the nexus of an individual's personal suffering having beneficial significance for others that when embraced results in the deification of the sufferer. For Hinton, when an individual recognizes this nexus, the individual's suffering is transformed into a sacrifice of love that makes the individual's suffering more endurable and makes the sufferer like God. Thus, suffering, the beneficence of others and deification are intimately entwined in Hinton's consolation for suffering. The purpose of this chapter is to explore the validity of Hinton's redemptive nexus of suffering, social beneficence and deification. Does such a nexus exist in the biblical and Christian tradition? We shall briefly explicate Hinton's understanding of these three components. We shall then broadly explore the nexus of suffering, social beneficence and deification in the Jewish and Christian traditions. Our exploration of the tradition will show the basic validity of Hinton's redemptive nexus of suffering. However, we shall see that the tradition reveals several areas where Hinton's conception of beneficence and deification is underdeveloped. First, His concept of beneficence is too private and one-sided. While he emphasizes the contribution of the sufferer to society, he does not address society's obligations to the sufferer. Second, Hinton is vague in elucidating how the sufferer benefits others. The tradition enriches Hinton's vagueness with its rich illustrations of how suffering individuals benefit others. We will suggest further possible examples from Hinton's practice of medicine and modern clinical trials. Finally, we shall see that the nature of

deification in Hinton tends to be unidirectional. For Hinton, embracing suffering as a sacrifice deifies the individual. Thus, suffering tends to occur before deification in Hinton. However, the tradition is poly-directional. Suffering occurs before, during and after deification in the tradition.

I. Hinton's Redemptive Nexus

James Hinton came to believe in a redemptive nexus of pain, beneficence, and deification. As we observed in chapter one, his concern to develop a theological understanding of pain arose because of his burden concerning Victorian society's ills, his practice of medicine, his theological disagreement with his father's evangelical preaching and his own battle with mental illness. However, Hinton's redemptive nexus took shape from simple observation combined with his keen intellect. As a surgeon, Hinton practiced medicine before the advances in anesthesiology. Encounters with pain left Hinton searching for some meaning to pain. Three incidents that Hinton observed unraveled the mystery of pain that he had been pondering. A brief consideration of these incidents will allow us to appreciate his redemptive nexus. The incidents concern peas, shoes and mothers.

Hinton stumbled on his answer concerning pain's role in life while picking peas in his garden. While gathering peas, Hinton became aware that he had scratched his face and other "sundry small inconveniences."²⁵⁷ This story about working in the garden can illustrate much of Hinton's thinking about pain. As humans, we all encounter pain. What makes pain endurable is how the individual is able to relate their pain to a larger understanding of life. We could say, using Hinton's experience of picking peas, that the

²⁵⁷ Ellice Hopkins, Life and Letters of James Hinton (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & co., 1883), 172.

pain,²⁵⁸ scratches, cuts, and inconveniences are made endurable, and even enjoyable, through recognizing that we are putting food on the table for those who we love. For Hinton, the minimizing of pain occurs through "having a consciousness co-extensive with humanity."²⁵⁹ This is the element that we have called beneficence in our analysis of Hinton's redemptive nexus. Closely related to beneficence is the element of deification. Hinton concludes his reflection on picking peas by saying,

So you perceive pain is no more necessarily an evil, but an essential element of the highest good, felt as evil by want in us -- partly want of knowledge, partly want of love . . . Christ's Life and death, which seems separate from ours, so contrasted with it, is, in truth, the type and pattern of our own, is the revelation of it, -- of our life as well as of God's.²⁶⁰

Deification, as we are using the term to describe Hinton's redemptive nexus, occurs whenever humans reflect the self-giving character of God in their own lives.

Another instance from Hinton's life that illustrates his thinking about pain in a redemptive nexus involves a story about shoes. Hinton had been riding the omnibus home at the end of the day when he realized he was the last passenger. In his altruistic way, he asked the driver to let him off to shorten the day of the omnibus workers. His reflection on his walk home captures Hinton's redemptive understanding:

Now, as I walked along the road, I was, of course, distinctly glad, not only that the men could go home to their families the sooner, but that it was my

²⁵⁸ Taylor and Lang have captured the painfulness of picking peas in a photo in *An American Exodus*. Kevin Starr in *Endangered Dreams: The Great Depression in California* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999) describes the photo of two men picking peas for a penny per pound and says, "We feel the pain in their backs" (page 265).

²⁵⁹ Hopkins, 173.

²⁶⁰ Hopkins, 173.

walking (and wearing out my shoes) that enabled them. Don't you see I must have felt this way? That man is made to feel so; that in this (at least) his nature is shown; that if he had a larger life, it would be so with greater pains; that – here's the point – the true bigness of his life is measured by his pains?²⁶¹

An element that makes this story amusing and telling is the extent of Hinton's poverty at this time so that he actually thought about his shoes wearing out from the walk.

Omnibuses were the mode of travel for the middle class and poor in Victorian society.

Amy Levy, a Jewish writer who championed women's issues,²⁶² gives us a glance of the social stratification of the era in her first stanza of "Ballade of an Omnibus:"

Some men to carriages aspire;
On some the costly hansoms wait;
Some seek a fly, on job or hire;
Some mount the trotting steed, elate.
I envy not the rich and great,
A wandering minstrel, poor and free,
I am contented with my fate—
An omnibus suffices me.²⁶³

Levy and Hinton rode the omnibus as the poor of London. Hinton in his altruistic way amidst his own poverty is willing to suffer loss so that others might benefit. His reflection on this event – "that man is made to feel so" -- suggests his understanding of

²⁶¹ Hopkins, 172.

²⁶² Cf. Linda Hunt Beckman, Amy Levy: Her Life and Writings (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000).

²⁶³ Amy Levy, edited by Melvyn New, The Complete Novels and Selected Writings of Amy Levy, 1861-1889 (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1993), 386.

deification as within God's original creation of humanity. Theologically, we might say that in such feelings we find the *imago Dei* in which God creates humanity.

Finally, Hinton also saw his redemptive understanding of pain, beneficence and deification in the role of motherhood. In discussing the latent nature of pain in human life, Hinton uses motherhood to show how love minimizes the latent pain.

Take, for example, the offices rendered with joy by a mother to her babe: let the love be wanting, and what remains? Not mere indifference, but vexation, labor, annoyance. A gladly accepted pain is in the mother's love; it is in all love that does not contradict the name.²⁶⁴

Thus, much of life is filled with latent suffering, but for Hinton, recognizing the beneficence of an act can transform the latent pain to something enduring. Love seeks beneficence for others. Love acts to serve others.

Hinton's emphasis on sacrifice as service to others is not abusive. To forestall a potential misunderstanding of Hinton's idea at this point, we must mention that his discussion of the sacrifice of mothers predates feminist concerns about motherly sacrifice as a loss of autonomy in a patriarchal setting. Feminists recognize the inherent danger that "motherhood as organized by marriage has meant performing these functions at the sacrifice of autonomy."²⁶⁵ Hinton was progressive for his day and disdained the sacrifice of women for men's interests or pleasures:

Woman's relation to man has been mixed up with the problem of pleasure: she has been sacrificed for that. So long as man either pursues or refuses

²⁶⁴ James Hinton, *The Mystery of Pain* (Boston: Cupples, Upham and Company, 1886 reprint), 44.

²⁶⁵ Miriam M. Johnson, "Maternal Agency vs. the Brotherhood of Males," *Provoking Agents: Gender and Agency in Theory and Practice*, edited by Judith Gardiner (Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 1995), 154.

pleasure, he does, and must, muddle his relations with women, and cannot get them right; that is true service. We do not ask even what woman needs, but what suits us. Those who love and honor her most are even more intent upon treating her with utter disregard and practical cruelty (for it is so), intenser, more exquisite, than can be conceived.²⁶⁶

For Hinton, a proper understanding of sacrifice, including a woman's sacrifice, must focus on what is right for society's good and not on men's pleasures. He saw the sacrifice of women for women's rights as a positive that men would need to embrace for the good of society.

Men shall be compelled to take their thought off the question of pleasure, and absolutely to enthrone their fellows' good, because women (insisting on saving their sisters) shall compel them to have a right, which means that their thought is absolutely on good, and not on their pleasure.²⁶⁷

This differentiation between pleasure and the good for society sharply juxtaposes the ideas of suffering and social beneficence in the thought of Hinton. Not all sacrifice is genuine. To be genuine, sacrifice must be for the good of society, not for the pleasures of the self or for the selfish pleasure of another.

Deification is latent behind such genuine sacrifice in Hinton's conception. He believed that God was working behind every sacrifice for "the traceable needs of men and women."²⁶⁸ A person who truly loves and sacrifices for others "is one with the Infinite Being"²⁶⁹ and is actually experiencing God sacrificing "in us."²⁷⁰ Deification,

²⁶⁶ Edith Ellis, Three Modern Seers: James Hinton, Nietzsche, Edward Carpenter (New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1910), 82.

²⁶⁷ Hopkins, 354.

²⁶⁸ Hopkins, 325.

²⁶⁹ Hopkins, 131.

thus, entails any act of genuine sacrifice that reflects the self-sacrificing God that benefits society. God works through people who act as God giving of the self for others. We must now begin our exploration of the Judeo-Christian tradition to see if Hinton's redemptive nexus is a figment of his own creation or if it is actually an expression consistent with the tradition.

II. The Redemptive Nexus in the Hebrew Bible and Judaism

The Hebrew Bible offers several instances where our nexus of suffering, deification and social beneficence is visible to various degrees. For the sake of brevity, we shall examine the Old Testament support for our redemptive nexus under three headings: monarchial sacrality, early Hebrew corporality, and post-monarchial sacral democratization.

A. The Hebrew Bible: Monarchial Sacrality

We will begin our examination of the biblical nexus of suffering, beneficence and deification with the monarchial period of the Hebrew bible because most critical scholars believe that the actual writing of the scriptural sources began during this time. For the purpose of our investigation, the monarchial period will serve as the tradition from which thinking about the relationship of suffering, beneficence and deification subsequently evolves in the Bible. Our investigation will begin with a brief consideration of the concept of sacral kingship. The notion of sacral kingship situates how the ideas of deification and social beneficence worked within the monarchial period. Since the king was God's representative and the source of social blessing, the theology of the monarchial period closely aligns the welfare of society with the welfare of the king.

²⁷⁰ Hopkins, 293.

However, we will see that the notion of a suffering king is problematic for monarchial theology. The Hebrew bible and biblical interpreters show various attempts at the resolution of the problem of a suffering king. We shall explore briefly how various passages in the Hebrew bible attempt to resolve the difficulty of a king that suffers. Despite the resistance to royal suffering in monarchial theologies, we will see that the eventual story of the survival of the Saulide and Davidic royal lines rests ultimately with the suffering of their royal descendents. The survival of the Davidic line fueled Second Temple Judaism's hope for a restored kingdom and ultimately gave rise to messianic expectations. Since the king in ancient Israel was God's representative who brought social blessing to the people, we will subsequently consider the missing feature in Hinton's nexus of society's obligations to the sufferer.

Cazelles vaguely defines sacral kingship as "an expression used by contemporary scholars to bring into focus the different aspects of the relationship 'God-King-People' as it underlies the different monarchic systems of the Ancient Near East."²⁷¹ Early investigations into sacral kingship in Israel undoubtedly overstated the similarities between Israel and the parallels from Egypt and Mesopotamia. This is especially true of the "Myth-and-Ritual School" associated with Hooke in Britain and the "Uppsala School" associated with Mowinckel in Scandinavia. However, there can be no doubt that Israel reflects something of a deified king, perhaps not as strong as Egyptian and Mesopotamian versions, but the king stands in society as God's representative. Gerald Cooke emphasizes that Israel's understanding of the king's relation to God was adoptionistic. Thus, "the King who will be Yahweh's son is nevertheless recognized to

²⁷¹ Henri Cazelles, "Sacral Kingship," Anchor Bible Dictionary, ed. D.N. Freedman (New York: Doubleday, 1992), V. 863.

be a human being.”²⁷² Israel had an intermediary understanding of the divine status of the king in contrast to the rest of the Near East. This intermediary understanding of divine kingship prevented the strong henotheism and prophetic monotheism of Israel from attacking the early institution of kingship. Nevertheless, monarchical Israel employed sacral kingship. “The mythological themes which survive and evidently flourish in Hebrew tradition clearly point to a divine king in some sense of the term.”²⁷³

Boadt nicely summarizes some of these themes:

Many of these attributes found in pagan literature about monarchs were used of Israel’s kings in the heyday of national independence from 1000 to 586 B.C. These titles were taken directly from characteristics usually associated with the gods. Thus the person of the king was sacred and above violation; he embodied blessing for his land (see Pss 2, 110). He brought harmony to the state and so all must pray for his well being (Pss 20:1-5; 72:15). He was an adopted son of God (Ps 2:7), protector of his people (Ps 89:18), gave fertility to the land (Ps 72:3, 16) and established justice for all (Ps 72:1-4).²⁷⁴

The idea of sacral kingship in ancient Israel not only borrowed elements of deification from its surrounding neighbors, but it also emphasized the role that the king played for society. Mowinckel’s assessment that “the entire soul of the society is embodied in the King in a special way” is valid.²⁷⁵ This understanding of the role of the king in Judah allows the writer of Lamentations to describe the king as “the breath (*ruach*) of our

²⁷² Gerald Cooke, “The Israelite King as Son of God,” Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft 73 (1961): 211.

²⁷³ Nicolas Wyatt, There’s Such Divinity Doth Hedge a King: Selected Essays of Nicolas Wyatt (London: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 206.

²⁷⁴ Lawrence Boadt, Reading the Old Testament: An Introduction (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1984), 242-243.

²⁷⁵ S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), 69.

nostrils, the LORD's anointed" (Lamentations 4:20). Commenting on this text, Northrop Frye says, "The king is not a representative of his people, but is his people in an individual form."²⁷⁶ Thus, in this way of conceiving of the king as the focal point of society, the king's wellbeing and success are reflections of the society's wellbeing and success. As the king goes, so the people go. We can very readily see that the royal theology of the Hebrew bible contains elements of deification and social beneficence, but we must explore now how the suffering of individuals worked in this sacral understanding of kingship.

Scholars have long noted a problem for ancient societies that employed sacral kingship regarding the issue of a king suffering or becoming ill. Over a hundred years ago, James Frazier summarized the dilemma nicely:

Now primitive peoples, as we have seen, sometimes believe that their safety and even that of the world is bound up with the life of one of these god-men or human incarnations of the divinity. Naturally, therefore, they take the utmost care of his life, out of a regard of their own. But no amount of care and precaution will prevent the man-god from growing old and feeble and at last dying. His worshipers have to lay their account with this sad necessity and to meet it as best they can. The danger is a formidable one; for if the course of nature is dependent on the man-god's life, what catastrophes may not be expected from the gradual enfeeblement of his powers and their final extinction in death?²⁷⁷

As a means of separating the king and his society from disaster, elaborate rituals arose amongst the various Mediterranean civilizations to protect the king from disaster.

²⁷⁶ Northrop Frye and Jay Macpherson, Biblical and Classical Myths: The Mythological Framework of Western Culture (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 101.

²⁷⁷ James Frazier, The Golden Bough: A Study in Magic and Religion (London: Macmillan and Company, 1900), 5-6.

Interpreters draw parallels to many of these ancient rituals in the Hebrew Bible's portrayal of kingship. We shall begin with the most speculative and work our way to more widely accepted rituals for the protection of the king.

The most speculative ritual regarding kingship adopted for interpretation of the Hebrew scripture is the Mesopotamian practice of ritually humiliating the king at the *Akitu* or New Year festival. Aubrey Johnson employs this Babylonian festival to interpret many of the psalms.²⁷⁸ He suggests that there was an annual temple ritual in which the king was humiliated in a ritual battle and subsequently restored to celebrate God's victory over chaos. The king's ritual restoration and God's victory over chaos culminate in an assurance of faithfulness to the dynasty. David J.A. Clines succinctly summarizes Johnson's use of the psalms:

Elements of this ritual drama are found by Johnson throughout the Psalter: Ps. 89.39-46 is the ritual humiliation of the king; Psalm 101 is his 'negative confession' or protestation of innocence; Psalm 18 is his thanksgiving for deliverance from ritual hazards; Pss. 2 and 110 depict the final stage of the drama, the fulfillment in reassuring oracles of Yahweh's promise to the dynasty.²⁷⁹

However, we must note that there are two major obstacles to accepting Johnson's use of the Babylonian New Year festival as a ritual for biblical kingship. First, the greatest difficulty with accepting Johnson's position is that one would expect evidence of such a festival to show up in biblical texts beyond the Psalter. Such texts are lacking despite Northrop Frye's attempt to understand David's dancing before the Ark of the Covenant

²⁷⁸ Cf. Aubrey Rodway Johnson, *Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel* (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), 104.

²⁷⁹ David J.A. Clines, *On the Way to the Postmodern: Old Testament Essays, 1967-1998, Volume 2* (London: Continuum International Publishing Group, 1998), 659.

as an act of ritual humiliation.²⁸⁰ Frye's evidence is too scanty to establish a narrative account of ritual humiliation in the biblical tradition of the monarchy. A second major obstacle to accepting Johnson's use of the Babylonian festival is that scholars do not agree about the significance of the actual Babylonian practice.²⁸¹ Interpretations of the ritual humiliation include "an act of atonement for the people, a symbolic death/resurrection of the king, an enthronement ritual, a rite of passage, and a rite of reversal."²⁸² This wide variety of interpretations of the actual Mesopotamian ritual and its apparent absence outside the Psalter makes the application of the ritual to ancient Israel highly suspect.

Another ritual that functions to separate the king from danger and is evident in the scripture is the practice of human sacrifice on behalf of the king.²⁸³ While the Hebrew bible gives a generally negative view of the practice, human sacrifice appears to have been an ancient ritual to protect royal interest in times of crisis. Smith says,

Descriptions of child sacrifice in Canaan and Israel specify their largely royal character, as undertaken in moments of crisis. A city under siege seems to be the most characteristic setting; child sacrifice was designed to enlist the aid of a god to ward off a threatening army. If this does

²⁸⁰ Frye, 101-102.

²⁸¹ Julye Didmead, The Akitu Festival: Religious Continuity and Royal Legitimation in Mesopotamia (Piscataway, NY: Gorgias Press, 2002), 79-80.

²⁸² Didmead, 79.

²⁸³ We are limiting our discussion of human sacrifice to its royal use; however, human sacrifice plays a much broader role in the Hebrew bible as attested by the verity of passages that mention it (Gen. 22; Lev. 18:21; 20:2-5; Deut. 12:31; 18:10; Josh. 6:26; Judges 11:30-40; I Kings 16:34; II Kings 3:27; 16:3; 17:17 and 31; 21:6; 23:10; II Chron. 28:3; 33:6; Ps. 106:37-38; Isa. 57:5; Jer. 7:31; 19:5; 32:35; Ezek. 16:20-21; 20:26 and 31; 23:37 and 39; Mic. 6:7). Jon D. Levenson argues in The Death and Resurrection of the Beloved Son: The Transformation of Child Sacrifice in Judaism and Christianity (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1993) that Jewish and Christian traditions of sacrifice, substitution, chosenness, and resurrection evolved from the protean and resilient tradition of child sacrifice within earliest Yahwism.

represent the customary setting for child sacrifice, then it belonged to urban, royal religion.²⁸⁴

Other scholars also note the royal character of such sacrifices. Stavrakopoulou argues that “child sacrifice played an important role within the royal Judahite cult.”²⁸⁵ Boehm says, “In this context, the sacrifice of the son is not regarded as an everyday kind of act carried out by ordinary people. It is the sacrifice of the son of the king indeed – ‘his (eldest) son,’ who is to rule after him.”²⁸⁶ In such royal child sacrifice, the issue of the social beneficence of the sacrifice is at the forefront. The child sacrifice is not only for the King but also for the safety of the entire society.²⁸⁷ Such an offering worked as an apotropaic rite to turn away danger from the king and his people. Unambiguous references to royal child sacrifice among Hebrew royalty include Ahaz (2 Kings 16:3) and Manasseh (2 Kings 21:6).²⁸⁸ According to Stavrakopoulou, the destruction of the tophet during the reform of Josiah (2 Kings 23:10) also suggests that child sacrifice was “understood to be part of the royal cult.”²⁸⁹ The sacrifices of Jephthah’s daughter (Judges 12) and the son of King Mesha of Moab (2 Kings 3:26-27) also reflect a similar ideology. Thus, we see in the biblical tradition of royal child sacrifice a move to protect the king, and hence his subjects, from disaster by the ritual. However, the Deuteronomistic history

²⁸⁴ M. S. Smith, Early History of God (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2002 Second Edition), 138.

²⁸⁵ Francesca Stavrakopoulou, King Manasseh and Child Sacrifice: Biblical Distortions of Historical Realities (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 2004), 12.

²⁸⁶ Omri Boehm, “Child Sacrifice, Ethical Responsibility and the Existence of the People of Israel,” Vetus Testamentum 54, no. 2 (2004): 150. Boehm further argues that the *Akedah* (Gen. 22) is a reflection of the sacrifice motif but emphasizes that survival depends on the only son’s survival and the father’s ethical responsibility.

²⁸⁷ Boehm, 150.

²⁸⁸ Cf. Levenson, 3ff.

²⁸⁹ Stavrakopoulou, 293.

and the prophetic tradition (Isa. 57:5; Jer. 19:5; Ezek. 16:20) ultimately cast the practice of child sacrifice in a negative light.

I would argue that the regular ritual for the welfare of a king in the Bible is prayer on behalf of and by the king. We must admit at this point that we possess only the stylized practice of prayer by and for the king in the historical books that reflect the Deuteronomistic emphasis on the role of prayer.²⁹⁰ From the perspective of the Deuteronomistic history, the only acceptable ritual in times of crisis is prayer. The Psalms that have a royal air would support that behind the theological perspectives of the historical books is a genuine historical practice of royal prayer. We know that other cultures of the Ancient Near East employed prayer for and by the kings in times of crisis. Ashurnasirpal, an Assyrian king, implores Ishtar because of persistent illness in language similar to Psalm 80.²⁹¹ Prayers for kings at times of battle with priestly proclamations of victory, similar to Psalm 20, were common in the Ancient Near East.²⁹² At the dedication of temples, like Solomon's prayer in 1 Kings 8:22ff., prayers reflect not simply the dedication of the building to the deity but also the dedication of the deity to "the prosperity of the dynasty."²⁹³ Hittite kings or their representatives prayed for the king's "health, long life, prosperity, victory over enemies, and divine support."²⁹⁴ Behind all of these royal prayers, I would argue, lies our triadic element of beneficence. A society

²⁹⁰ Cf. Samuel Balentine, Prayer in the Hebrew Bible: The Drama of Divine-Human Dialogue (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1993), 62.

²⁹¹ Donald F. Murray, Divine Prerogative and Royal Pretension (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1998), 266ff.

²⁹² Sa-Moon Kang, Divine War in the Old Testament and in the Ancient Near East (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1989), 200.

²⁹³ Tomoo Ishida, The Royal Dynasties in Ancient Israel (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1977), 145.

²⁹⁴ Itamar Singer, Hittite Prayers (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 5.

benefits from the success, welfare, victory and general wellbeing of its king. Of our triad of suffering, beneficence and deification, sacral kingship in the Hebrew Scriptures possesses elements of beneficence and deification but resists associating suffering with royal figures for the reason that we have already cited. In the ideology of sacral kingship, a suffering king signifies that the people will experience suffering. To appreciate the relationship of the ritual of prayer in its social and sacral context, we must now explore some instances in the Hebrew bible of royal prayer.

We shall first explore the ritual of royal prayer in the historical books before considering examples from the Psalter. The king is the divine instrument by which God brings blessing, and even judgment, upon the people. The episode of David's census of the people is a negative example of God using the king for judgment. In 2 Samuel 24:1, we read, "Again the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he incited David against them, saying, 'Go, count the people of Israel and Judah.'" The result of David's census is a judgment by plague upon the people (v. 15). Termination of the judgment and aversion of the plague occur through David's "supplication for the land" (v. 25). Thus, the king is the focal point of God's dealings with the people, positively and negatively. In a similar way, Isaiah includes God's appointment of inferior leaders as a punishment of the people (Isa. 3:1-5). Thus, we can agree with Mowinckel about the sacral function of the king:

The king, therefore, had great responsibility. He held in his hands the destiny of his people, according to the kind of man he was. The piety of the king was reckoned by God as the merit of the people. His sins infected the whole people and led to their destruction.²⁹⁵

²⁹⁵ S. Mowinckel, He That Cometh (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1956), 71.

The king clearly holds a sacral position that benefits his society. However, we must emphasize that the sacral function of the king relates closely to his piety in the practice of prayer in the historical books.

Another prayer of David, which we should briefly consider, is found in 2 Samuel 15:30-31. David prays for the counsel of Ahithophel to be foolishness in the Absalom crisis. The significance of the prayer is visible in the historian's subsequent comment at 17:14b: "For the Lord had ordained to defeat the good counsel of Ahithophel, so that the Lord might bring ruin on Absalom." This is one of only three places in the succession narrative where the historian "speaks of God explicitly."²⁹⁶ The verses suggest that David's prayer drives the outcome of the Absalom crisis. Walter Brueggemann describes the sacral character of this crisis:

In verses 30-31 we have another juxtaposition of theological reality and political realism. The departure from the city is a time of ritual grief (v. 30). Behind the ritual is the awareness that when the king departs, reality is under threat. The weeping is thus ritual acknowledgement of political reality. David is able to participate in the grief because he does indeed regard himself as the embodiment of royal reality.²⁹⁷

David's prayer ultimately resolves the crisis, allows his return to Jerusalem, and removes the threat from the people. The threat to the people is not quite as explicit as we shall see in the case of the next passage that we will consider.

²⁹⁶ Gerhard von Rad, Old Testament Theology: Volume I (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), 314.

²⁹⁷ Walter Brueggemann, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, First and Second Samuel (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990), 304.

In 2 Kings 18:5, we find the Deuteronomistic historian's evaluation of King Hezekiah. "He trusted (Hebrew root = *bāṭah*) the Lord, the God of Israel; so that there was no one like him among all the Kings of Judah after him, or among those who were before him." This type of formula only occurs in the assessment of two kings, Hezekiah and Josiah.²⁹⁸ Many suggest that the reason for such a high evaluation of Hezekiah is his reform, but if this were the case, why is there only one verse (2 Kings 18:4) committed to it? The high estimation of Hezekiah is likely due to Hezekiah's trust (*bāṭah*) in the Lord through his practice of prayer at times of crises (2 Kings 19:14-19 and 2 Kings 20:2-3). Gerbrandt understands the high estimation of Hezekiah by the Deuteronomistic historian in relation to the King's practice of prayer. "The role of the king in such a time of crises, when the enemy threatens, is to trust Yahweh, to pray to Yahweh, and to await his answer."²⁹⁹ The progression of 2 Kings 19 is interesting. After the initial threat by Sennacherib's Rabshakeh (18:19ff.), Hezekiah asks Isaiah to pray (19:4). The result is a prophetic word to Hezekiah through Isaiah: "Do not be afraid" (19:6). This prophetic reassurance is an echo of the holy war tradition.³⁰⁰ However, the resolution of the threat only occurs when Hezekiah prays himself (19:14-19).

The significance of the role of prayer for the Deuteronomistic historian as a ritual of deliverance for the king and his society stands out even more strongly in Hezekiah's second prayer concerning his illness. According to Robert L. Cohn, there are four occurrences of a "type-scene in which a dying king seeks and receives an oracle from a

²⁹⁸ For an interesting discussion of this, see Gerald E. Gerbrandt's Kingship according to the Deuteronomistic History (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 51-53.

²⁹⁹ Gerald E. Gerbrandt, Kingship according to the Deuteronomistic History (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1986), 101.

³⁰⁰ T.R. Hobbs, Word Biblical Commentary: 2 Kings (Waco: Word Books, 1985), 275.

prophet about his fate” in First and Second Kings.³⁰¹ Unlike Jeroboam (1 Kings 14), Ahaziah (2 Kings 1), and Ben-hadad (2 Kings 8), Hezekiah responds to the crises of his illness by praying. The Deuteronomistic historian portrays Hezekiah as a righteous king who prays in times of crisis. Because Hezekiah prays, God sends Isaiah with an oracle of salvation. Cohn recognizes that “Hezekiah’s recovery carries with it the promise of the salvation of Jerusalem from Assyrian hands.”³⁰² Thus, we can see the sacral significance of Hezekiah’s practice of prayer as benefitting, not just himself, but also his society. We must admit that the story has all the elements of our redemptive nexus of suffering, deification and societal beneficence, but the story conceives of suffering in only a negative way. Thus, Hezekiah’s prayer functions as an apotropaic rite.

We shall now consider several psalms that mention prayer by and for the king which originate in the time of the monarchy.³⁰³ Before examining individual psalms that describe the royal use of prayer, we should make a few introductory remarks about the royal psalms in general as they relate to our topic. The royal psalms promote “a view of the world which emphasized the king’s central role in the cosmic order.”³⁰⁴ However, to interpret this as only legitimating the institution of kingship is to miss that the royal

³⁰¹ Robert L. Cohn, Berit Olam: Studies in Hebrew Narrative & Poetry, 2 Kings (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1999), 140.

³⁰² Cohn, 141.

³⁰³ Cf. Leopold Sabourin, The Psalms: Their Origin and Meaning (Staten Island: Alba House, 1969), 207-208.

³⁰⁴ K. W. Whitelam, “Israelite Kingship: The Royal Ideology and Its Opponents,” The World of Ancient Israel, ed. R.E. Clements (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 128.

psalms also function to “critique” the institution of kingship.³⁰⁵ J.J.M. Roberts describes both functions of royal ideology:

With the establishment of the monarchy, a new religious ideology was developed to legitimate the human monarch as the chosen agent of the divine king . . . On the one hand, one can see how this ideology served to stabilize the power structure, but while it certainly served royal interests, this ideology can hardly be dismissed as all bad. The ideology of kingship emphasized the king’s duty to promote justice, and the royal administration of justice probably offered the powerless the first effective check against the oppression of powerful local leaders that they had experienced in a long time.³⁰⁶

The psalms that we will consider (Psalms 2, 18, 20 and 21) link the king’s prayer or answered prayer “with the king’s office as military leader and defender of the nation.”³⁰⁷ It is not difficult to see the benefits that the people believed were derived from the king’s protection. The king’s victory ideally secures peace for the whole nation. In the conventional courtly language of the psalms, the victory is worldwide (Psalm 72:8-11), but the king’s victory is also connected to the royal treatment of the powerless (Psalm 72:12-14). We could describe this commitment of the king to the practice of justice as evidence of his deification. The king is God’s representative of justice and righteousness (Psalm 72:1-2). As we explore some individual Psalms concerning the ritual role of prayer, issues of deification, beneficence and deliverance from suffering lie close at hand.

³⁰⁵ Walter Brueggemann, The Message of the Psalms (Minneapolis: Augsburg Press, 1984), 151.

³⁰⁶ J.J.M. Roberts, “In Defense of the Monarchy,” Ancient Israelite Religion, ed. P. Miller, P. Hanson and S. McBride (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1994), 386.

³⁰⁷ James L. Mays, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching, Psalms (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1994), 101.

Psalm 2 is an enthronement psalm. Our concern is with its third section where the King recites Yahweh's declaration:³⁰⁸

I will tell of the decree of the Lord:
He said to me, You are my son;
Today I have begotten you.
Ask of me, and I will make the nations your heritage,
and the ends of the world your possession. (vv. 7-8)

In these verses, the king's sacral-deified position is closely related to an assurance that the largesse of his reign depends on his prayer to God. Victory is contingent on the king's asking Yahweh for assistance.

Psalm 18 records a king's thanksgiving for victory. Johnson thinks that this belongs to a ritual combat,³⁰⁹ but Mowinckel suggests that a very "real historical situation" is behind the psalm.³¹⁰ Several verses recount the king's prayer in the face of this crisis, whether ritual or real.

I call upon the Lord, who is worthy to be praised,
so I shall be saved from my enemies. (Verse 3)
In my distress I called upon the Lord;
to my God I cried for help.
From his temple he heard my voice,
and my cry to him reached his ears. (Verse 6)

³⁰⁸ Aubrey Johnson, Sacral Kingship in Ancient Israel (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 1955), 120.

³⁰⁹ Johnson, 112.

³¹⁰ S. Mowinckel, The Psalms in Israel's Worship (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1962), 254-255.

The psalm first recounts the initial prayer (v. 3) and then records the response of God for which the psalm gives thanksgiving (v. 6). We see again that the king's deliverance and victory are a result of the king's prayer.

Psalm 20 changes the speaker. Here we have the people praying that God hears the king's prayers. In Psalms 2 and 18, the emphasis is on the deliverance and victory of the king, and the deliverance of the people is *ipso facto*. Psalm 20 shows how important this was to the people themselves in that here they pray for God to hear the king.

The Lord answer you in the day of trouble!

The name of the God of Jacob protect you. (Verse 1)

May he grant you your hearts desire . . .

May the Lord fulfill all your petitions. (Verses 4a and 5b)

James Mays describes these verses as presenting “the deep awareness of a people that their destiny is bound up with the success of the one who has been invested with power for the sake of the whole.”³¹¹

Psalm 21, like Psalm 18, is a thanksgiving for royal deliverance, but unlike Psalm 18, someone other than the king gives thanks for God's assistance to the monarch.

You have given him his heart's desire,

and have not withheld the request of his lips. (Verse 2)

He asked you for life; you gave it to him,

length of days forever and ever. (Verse 4)

An interesting feature of this Psalm is the reason it gives for God's deliverance of the king: “the king trusts (Hebrew root = *bāṭaḥ*) in the Lord” (v. 7). The Psalm employs the same term that we observed in the high evaluation of Hezekiah in association with his prayer.

³¹¹ Mays, 100.

To summarize the sacral function of the king at prayer in the psalms, we can note James Mays' words:

According to the idea of kingship in the psalms, the king was given the privilege and power of prayer in a preeminent way. As the one who was son in relation to God, he could ask and hope to be answered. But what he received from God he must request . . . He was the model of the indispensable place of prayer in the human relation to God.³¹²

We might add that his prayers were so indispensable that the people found his prayers a topic for their own prayers. As the divine representative, the king's safety equaled the safety of the people. When God protected their king, they also found peace and blessing. In all of these royal prayers, we see the avoidance of suffering for the king's welfare and the welfare of his subjects. As we have said, the biblical concept of sacral kingship embraces the ideas of deification and social beneficence but rejects a suffering role for the king because it forecasts ill for the king and society. Surprisingly, however, there is an indication of suffering contributing to society's beneficence in the way the Bible portrays the end of the dynasties of Saul and David which I think sheds light on subsequent exilic and post-exilic perspectives.

As we have seen, societies employing sacral kingship generally had difficulty with the conception of a suffering king because the success of the society depended on the king's well-being. The Hebrew bible largely reflects this perspective in its accounts of royal child sacrifice and prayer for and by kings at times of crisis. These rituals were ways to try to establish the welfare of the king and the society. However, the difficulty with sickness and infirmity runs deeper in the biblical account on several levels than a

³¹² Mays, 103-104.

mere desire ritually to separate the king from calamity. First, sickness in Deuteronomic theology is a punishment for sin. This theological outlook occurs regularly in the scripture beyond the Deuteronomistic history. Second, beyond this theological outlook, however, the story of King David's rise to power shows a disdain and hatred toward the infirm. Astonishingly, however, the disdained group of the lame and the blind play a key role in the survival of the Davidic and Saulide families according to the Deuteronomistic history. The very thing that was ritually avoided, royal suffering, becomes the vehicle for the ongoing existence of God's people. We must now briefly explore how the Deuteronomistic history relates this tale of disdain for the disabled and how the disabled subsequently procured survival of the people.

David's disdain of the disabled is highlighted in the story of the capture of Jerusalem from the Jebusites in 2 Samuel 5:6-9. The hatred of David towards the disabled has become a *crux interpretum* for biblical scholars.³¹³ The word pair, "lame and blind," occurs three times in the passage: Verse 6 records the Jebusites' "pre-battle verbal taunting" that the blind and lame could defend the city from David's attack;³¹⁴ verse 8a records David's charge "to attack the lame and blind, those whom David hates," and verse 8b contains the word pair in an etiological saying such that "the blind and lame shall not come into the house."³¹⁵ Undoubtedly, the etiological formula of verse 8b betrays an anachronistic interpretation of the event by a redactor or author since neither temple nor palace were in existence at the time of David's capture of the city. The

³¹³ Cf. Edward D. Herbert, "2 Samuel V 6: An Interpretive Crux Reconsidered in the Light of 4QSam," *Vetus Testamentum* 44, no. 3 (1994): 340-348.

³¹⁴ G. H. Jones, *The Nathan Narratives* (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1990), 125.

³¹⁵ Anthony R. Ceresko, "The Identity of 'the Blind and the Lame' in 2 Samuel 5:8b," *Catholic Biblical Quarterly* 63 (2001): 26.

authorial-redactional use of the word pair, lame and blind, is significant in the Deuteronomistic history because the terms bind the fates of the Saulide and Davidic families to similar ends. Despite David's supposed hatred of the lame and blind, we find David in faithfulness to his covenant with Jonathan welcoming, feeding at his table and honoring the lame Mephibosheth (2 Sam. 9:1ff.), the son of Jonathan and grandson of Saul. Mephibosheth's crippling is a result of his nurse fleeing the slaughter of King Saul and Jonathan (1 Kings 4:4). While Mephibosheth's disability rendered him politically non-threatening to David's reign, the disability becomes the ultimate reason for the continuation of the Saulide family.³¹⁶ Thus, we see that the suffering, which ancient monarchs and societies tried to avoid, ultimately becomes the vehicle for the survival of a people. Mephibosheth's suffering acts for the beneficence of the Saulide lineage.

In 2 Kings 25, the Deuteronomistic history again echoes a similar turn of events in the stories of the final kings of Judah, Jehoiachin and Zedekiah. These last kings of Jerusalem resonate with the Mephibosheth story in the two motifs of eating at the king's table and disability.³¹⁷ After the exile of Jehoiachin, Zedekiah becomes king in Jerusalem (2 Kings 24:8-7). When Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon, the Babylonians laid siege to the city, slaughtered Zedekiah's children before his eyes, and blinded him (2 Kings 25:7). In the complex of Samuel-Kings, this is the only time that the Hebrew root "to blind" occurs outside of its threefold use in the word pair "lame and blind" in 2 Samuel 5:6-9.³¹⁸ Zedekiah's blinding brings the house of David to a similar fate as the house of Saul. As a disabled captive, Zedekiah no longer poses a threat to the

³¹⁶ Jeremy Schipper, "'Significant Resonances' with Mephibosheth in 2 Kings 25:27-30: A Response to Donald F. Murray," Journal of Biblical Literature 124, no. 3 (2005): 527.

³¹⁷ Schipper, 524.

³¹⁸ Ceresko, 29.

reigning king of Babylon. The fates of the Saulide and Davidic dynasties also coalesce in the image of fallen royalty receiving the benefit of eating at the reigning king's table.

The last four verses of 2 Kings give the account of Jehoiachin dining at the Babylonian King's table:

In the thirty-seventh year of the exile of King Jehoiachin of Judah, in the twelfth month, on the twenty-seventh day of the month, King Evil-merodach of Babylon, in the year that he began to reign, released Jehoiachin of Judah from prison; he spoke kindly to him, and gave him a seat above the other seats of the kings who were with him in Babylon. So Jehoiachin put aside his prison clothes. Every day of his life he dined regularly in the king's presence. For his allowance, a regular allowance was given him by the king, a portion every day, as long as he lived.

Just what these verses promise to the exilic community is a topic of debate among biblical scholars. Some scholars including Gerhard von Rad optimistically contend that the verses "supply hope for the restoration of the Davidic monarchy."³¹⁹ Jon Levenson makes a similar claim when he says, "The last four verses of Kings announce, in a cautious, nuanced way, that a scion of David, king of Israel, is yet alive and well."³²⁰ A more pessimistic view of the last four verses is given by Martin Noth who saw the verses as simply giving the Deuteronomistic historians final update on Jehoiachin without ameliorating his pessimistic theology.³²¹ Between the pessimism of Noth and the optimism of von Rad, another interpretation of the significance of these verses is the nuanced approach that recognizes the Deuteronomistic History's kerygma to return to

³¹⁹ Schipper, 521.

³²⁰ Jon D. Levenson, "The Last Four Verses in Kings," Journal of Biblical Literature 103, no. 3 (1984): 361.

³²¹ Cf. Donald F. Murray, "Of All the Hopes: Or Fear? Jehoiachin in Babylon (2 Kings 25:27-30)," Journal of Biblical Literature 120, no. 2 (2001): 245ff.

YHWH.³²² The final verses of 2 Kings serve “as a token presaging not a hopeful future for an heir to the Davidic promise but a more tolerable future for all vanquished Judeans.”³²³ Thus, the ironic turn of events for sacral kingship in the Hebrew bible is that the prosperity of the people does not finally rest in the hands of the deified-king, despite the peoples’ repeated prayers and rituals to this end. The ultimate beneficence of the people rests in their own hands through returning to God. For the Saulide and Davidic dynasties, ultimate survival occurs not through apotropaic rituals but through ignominious suffering.

What can we say about the relationship of Hinton’s redemptive nexus to the royal theologies of the deified king who benefits society through his wellbeing and the deuteronomistic conclusion that the dynasties survived because of the ironic suffering of the Saulide and Davidic descendents? I believe that an appreciation of the royal theology of the Hebrew bible helps us to recognize something about suffering that Hinton missed in his theological nexus. Suffering is ultimately a social issue that requires a social, not simply a personal, solution. Hinton in The Mystery of Pain addresses suffering only from the vantage of personal experience. While he discusses the social beneficence that can arise from an individual’s experience of suffering, he excludes the social dimensions that precede and establish structures that promote social wellbeing. While Israel’s attempt at monarchy ended in ruin, the royal theology reflects Israel’s attempt to establish a social structure that procures societal wellbeing for its citizens. While we may be surprised at the level to which the royal theology roots the welfare of the people in the welfare of the deified king, the health of individuals in modern times is equally dependent upon the

³²² Cf. Schipper, 529; Murray, 265.

³²³ Murray, 565.

welfare of powerful personages. Political leaders and healthcare executives now make decisions that precede, influence and establish for good or ill the relative access of individuals to care and treatment. However, unlike the royal and Deuteronomistic theologians who recognized and criticized the relative merit of the various kings, many modern Christian communities are in a state of denial about the social and political realities of healthcare and health delivery as controlled by politicians, lobbyists, corporate interests and insurance executives. They have replaced the social and political reality of health and wellbeing with the specter that the government is getting too big and that too much bureaucratic oversight is bad. What they offer in exchange for government involvement is little more than a go-it-alone ideology. The Christian Right ironically employs social Darwinism and Libertarian economics as its basic philosophical stance in an effort to decry big government, socialism and Marxism.³²⁴ However, they fail to notice that they have deified a new entity: “They have been so busy challenging the concentration of power in big government that they have ignored the concentration of power in big business.”³²⁵ The enduring lesson of the royal theology and Deuteronomistic history is that wherever one centralizes the welfare and wellbeing of society, whether in kings, politicians or free markets, the centralization of power must be judged on its societal impact for the good of its whole citizenry. Just as the Deuteronomistic history critiqued the Kings of Israel and Judah, modern Christianity needs to hold its social ideology up for critical consideration.

³²⁴ Cf. Andrew D. Walsh, Religion, Economics, and Public Policy: Ironies, Tragedies and Absurdities of the Contemporary Culture Wars (Westport, CT: Praeger Press, 2000), 11 and 23.

³²⁵ Walsh, 82.

The contemporary adherence to capitalism and free enterprise by Conservative Christians has lost its focus on why historically the ideology gained a sacrosanct status. In a capitalistic society, an individual, not born a Lord or Baron, was able to move into the privileged status of ownership and personal wealth. Capitalism itself was a shifting of the privilege of wealth to greater numbers of individuals. However, the shifting of the privilege of wealth was short-lived in early America. Michael Foley distinguishes between two periods of American Capitalism. In the earlier period of “small producer-capitalism,” the American orthodoxy developed: “A basic legal equality, combined with an equality of access to the market, was thought to carry potential for a wide distribution of goods and positions.”³²⁶ However, the nineteenth century brought a new form of “corporate capitalism” that effectually reversed the American orthodoxy of “small-producer capitalism.”³²⁷

In this period, free enterprise and competition had been extended, or corrupted, to produce vast economic empires and natural monopolies, along with well-established business and financial elites and a burgeoning industrial working class. Notional equality had surrendered to huge inequalities in wealth, status, and prospects.³²⁸

During this time, corporate capitalism necessitated the establishment of new social initiatives for the welfare of the people. Today’s conservative Christians could learn much from their religious predecessors’ dealings with the results of corporate capitalism.

³²⁶ Michael Foley, American Credo: The Place of Ideas in U. S. Politics (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 125.

³²⁷ Foley, 125.

³²⁸ Foley, 125f..

In the nineteenth century, churches, fraternal organizations, some employers and labor groups established “sickness funds” as a security for individuals who became ill.³²⁹ Early laborers, contrary to the go-it-alone mentality of some of today’s Conservative Christians, formed associations to help their fellow workers in times of need. Tocqueville, in his travels through the United States in 1831, describes the American penchant for establishing associations:

Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions, constantly form associations. They have not only commercial and manufacturing companies, in which all take part, but associations of a thousand other kinds – religious, moral, serious, futile, extensive or restricted, enormous or diminutive. The Americans make associations to give entertainments, to found establishments for education, to build inns, to construct churches, to diffuse books, to send missionaries to the antipodes; and in this manner they found hospitals, prisons, and schools.³³⁰

When Americans saw their fellow laborers in crisis due to illness and the concomitant financial impact on the families of sick workers, associations formed to establish sickness funds and mutual insurance to help their neighbors. George Whitfield Mead describes a sickness fund administered by a church in Philadelphia:

The members of the Beneficiary Association pay a Proposition fee of one dollar, and monthly dues of fifty cents. Members of the society who are not more than one month in arrears are entitled, when sick or unable to follow their usual vocation, to five dollars per week for a period of not more than ten weeks in any one year. On the death of a member in good standing, a funeral benefit of seventy-five dollars is given to the widow or legal representative. In event that the

³²⁹ Cf. John E. Murray, Origins of American Health Insurance: A History of Industrial Sickness Funds (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2007).

³³⁰ Alexis de Tocqueville, Democracy in America, trans. by Henry Reeves (New York: The Colonial Press, 1899), 374.

funds in the treasury are not sufficient to pay the death claim of any member, the President makes a *pro rata* assessment upon all the members in order to make up the deficiency. The society as an organization is dissolved every twelve months, when the funds of the society are equally divided among its members, according to their payment therein. Officers are then elected, and the Association enters upon a new year with a fresh set of books.³³¹

Mead notes that unlike “unreliable and exorbitant insurance companies,” the church beneficial associations provide for its members so that they did not have to “rely on friends and charity in times of misfortune.”³³²

Some voices within the Church reacted negatively to these associations. However, the negative reaction was not rooted in go-it-alone thinking or antisocialist rhetoric. Various voices from the American Churches condemned the associations because they were too restrictive in terms of who could belong and benefit from the association. Some Christian leaders in the nineteenth century and early twentieth century saw the need for such associations as a failure of the church to promote a proper social order. Far removed from the go-it-alone and anti-socialistic message of Christians today, they condemned these efforts at socialism not because they were socialistic but because they did not help enough people; they were forms of a selfish socialism that Christian principles should surpass.

American Christians of various denominational allegiances, both mainline and independent, agreed on the need for a socialism surpassing the associations. Francis Vinton, an Episcopal Priest, in 1855 makes this point:

³³¹ George Whitfield Mead, Modern Methods in Church Work: the Gospel Renaissance (New York: Dodd, Mead and Company, 1897), 296f.

³³² Mead, 298.

A mutual insurance company, excluding all who cannot pay and all whose payment would not refund the cost of their support, proclaims itself a Brotherhood, and takes profanely on its lips the sacred names of mercy, truth, and love, falsifying each in turn.³³³

For Vinton, the need for such associations was evidence of the Church's failure. These "Social experiments," according to Vinton, were "the voices of nature and the voice of God, protesting against the Church."³³⁴ He felt that the example of the early Church proves that American Christians can do more to include even those who could not afford to belong to one of the associations.

That text which tells us how primitive Christians sold their goods, and had all things common, is pressed into the service of a selfish Socialism: ignoring the rest of the same text, which tells us that primitive Christians "parted their goods to all men, as every man had need."³³⁵

Vinton's concluding appeal was for "the earnestness and wisdom of Socialists" to "be transplanted into the Church" so that "Christian Socialism" would surpass the current practices of the selfish socialism of the associations.³³⁶

An American Baptist, W. W. Everts, in 1870 argues that public welfare should flow from a proper understanding of Christian regeneration.³³⁷ He says that an

³³³ Francis Vinton, "Socialism," Lectures on the Evidences of Christianity: Delivered in Philadelphia by Clergymen of the Protestant Episcopal Church (Philadelphia: E. H. Butler & Co. 1855), 331f.

³³⁴ Vinton, 332f.

³³⁵ Vinton, 333.

³³⁶ Vinton, 336.

³³⁷ W. W. Everts, "A Regenerated World" The Baptist Missionary Magazine 50, no. 11 (1870): 401-408.

“improved social as well as political condition is embraced in Christian regeneration.”³³⁸

His reason for linking public welfare to the Christian doctrine of regeneration is ultimately a way to overcome the omissions and abuses occurring within the social societies:

A late historian of communism, deploring its failures, incidentally directs attention to the Christian Church, as the most cheering hope of socialism. And what do reformers seek not provided for in the Church? Her philosophy is more profound, reforming the life by changing the heart. Her dispensation of charity is without expense of rents, pageants, or official service, and better guarded against frauds and partiality.³³⁹

Thus, both Vinton and Everts believe that the Christian response to social ills needs to go beyond the exclusive associations of their day.

In 1912, a Methodist Bishop, Frederick Deland Leete, made similar observations. He complained that “the church brotherhood, which doles out charity but does not teach brotherhood, is in a little business.”³⁴⁰ Christians must adopt a larger vision of doing well for their neighbors. The solution for Bishop Leete moves beyond a selfish socialism to the socialism of Jesus Christ. He asks, “Are we to have the socialism of organized selfishness or the socialism of Christian philanthropy?”³⁴¹ Leete insists upon a Christian version of socialism in full awareness of the political alternative of Marxism:

Very profound students may be quoted who believe that the only way to prevent the Socialism of Karl Marx, which bases the whole character of life upon economic relations, from sweeping through the world and from

³³⁸ Everts, 402.

³³⁹ Everts, 402.

³⁴⁰ Frederick Deland Leete, Christian Brotherhoods (Cincinnati: Eaton and Main, 1912), 395.

³⁴¹ Leete, 395.

overthrowing not merely capitalism, but the most valued institutions of society, is to hasten forward the day and deeds of the socialism of Jesus Christ. A worldwide brotherhood, which finds its inspiration in the obligations and sanctions of Christianity, and which seeks not merely universal prosperity, but that substantial goodness of heart without which material wealth is a curse, alone will produce a type of society satisfactory to men and permanent in its gifts to human life.³⁴²

Vinton, Everts, and Leete reject forms of socialism not congruent with certain values of the Christian faith. Chief among these values for Vinton, Everts and Leete are a concern for the poorest of the poor, an insistence that excluding those who cannot contribute is selfish, and the need for a religious awakening within individuals to duties of genuine Christian brotherhood.

Surprisingly, evangelical and fundamentalist views around the beginning of the twentieth century were also tolerant of socialism. Charles R. Erdman and Charles Monroe Sheldon are examples. Erdman was a contributor to The Fundamentals, the twelve-volume series that defined fundamentalism's resistance to modernism.³⁴³ Erdman denounced the idea of "Christian Socialism" because the "Church recognizes that it has no right to ally itself with any political party."³⁴⁴ However, despite objecting to the adoption of a wholesale "Christian Socialism," Erdman insists that the adoption of socialism is a personal choice. "The Church leaves its members free to adopt or reject

³⁴² Leete, 396.

³⁴³ Charles R. Erdman, "The Church and Socialism," The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth, ed. R. A. Torrey, A. C. Dixon and Others (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1988 Reprint), IV, 97-108.

³⁴⁴ Erdman, 100.

Socialism as they may deem wise. A man may be an ardent Socialist and a sincere Christian, or may be a true Christian and a determined opponent of Socialism.”³⁴⁵

In language that most fundamentalists today would find unintelligible, Erdman describes “Socialistic proposals” for which “most Christians admit the wisdom” including public schools and the postal service in America.³⁴⁶ Erdman envisions government ownership of railroads, mines, public utilities, and factories, and says, “This would not involve questions of religion, but of expediency and political wisdom, with which problems the Church has nothing to do.”³⁴⁷ However, Erdman believes that the Church’s spiritual work impacts the political sphere. Socialism “insists that better social conditions will produce better men; Christianity teaches that better men are needed to produce better conditions.”³⁴⁸

If Socialism is ever to succeed as an economic theory, it can only be by the aid of the Church; for of all conceivable social systems, none would be more dependent upon high moral character and exalted principles than a socialistic state; and the production of such character and enforcement of such principles are the proved function of the Christian Church.³⁴⁹

How are we to understand Erdman’s insistence that Socialism can only succeed through the aid of the Church? Erdman saw the influence of the Church in an individualistic way. For Erdman, the church through preaching the gospel is a source for individual moral virtue that has social implications beyond mere orthodoxy.

³⁴⁵ Erdman, 100.

³⁴⁶ Erdman, 100.

³⁴⁷ Erdman, 100.

³⁴⁸ Erdman, 104.

³⁴⁹ Erdman, 104.

Some are quite comfortable under what they regard as orthodox preaching, even though they know their wealth has come from the watering of stocks and from wrecking railroads, and from grinding the faces of the poor. The supposed orthodoxy of such preaching is probably defective in its statements of the social teaching of the Gospels. One might be a social bandit and buccaneer and yet believe in the virgin birth and in the resurrection of Christ; but one cannot be a Christian unless he believes “that if One died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again;” and to live for Christ means to live for Him in every sphere and relationship of life, whether employer or employee, capitalist or laborer, stock-holder or wage-earner.³⁵⁰

Despite Erdman’s individualistic emphasis, his tolerance of government led economic/social programs is unheard of among today’s conservative Christians.³⁵¹

Charles M. Sheldon also requires consideration. Sheldon was an evangelical pastor of the Central Congregational Church in Topeka, Kansas. To increase attendance at the Sunday evening service, Sheldon exchanged the traditional delivery of sermons with the serial reading of what became his best selling novel, In His Steps.³⁵² The substance of Sheldon’s serial story was the potential to impact society by individuals living according to what Jesus would do in any given situation. The continuing popularity of the work is evident on bracelets, key chains, and trinkets emblazed with

³⁵⁰ Erdman, 107.

³⁵¹ Cf. J. Matthew Wilson, “Religion and American Public Opinion: Economic Issues,” The Oxford Handbook of Religion and American Politics, ed. by Corwin E. Smidt, Lyman A Kellstedt, and James L. Guth (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 194. Wilson shows the voting attitudes of evangelicals as the least favorable to government programs in comparison to mainline, Catholic, and black churches.

³⁵² Charles M. Sheldon, In His Steps, What Would Jesus Do? (Chicago: Advance Publishing Co., 1898).

W.W.J.D. (What would Jesus do?).³⁵³ The W.W.J.D. phenomenon is “widely associated with American evangelicalism.”³⁵⁴ However, the modern fascination with W.W.J.D. seems more about individual choices than social impact and systemic change as Sheldon intended.

Sheldon’s In His Steps depicts Christians confronting social ills to influence social transformations. While Sheldon vaguely develops the individual’s impact on social structures in this novel, the work shows that social ills are systemic in nature. He portrays unemployment, prostitution, drunkenness, disease-infested tenements and unfair labor practices as more than simply the result of the individual sufferer’s moral choices. Systemic contributors to such human problems include structures bigger than the individuals who find themselves in such situations. Unethical business practices, corporate greed, social policies and a general disregard for the welfare of one’s neighbors play a role in such situations. Most people brandishing W.W.J.D. paraphernalia are unaware that Sheldon, as a Christian Socialist, wanted systemic change. He explicitly outlines some of the change in another of his novels entitled The Heart of the World: A Story of Christian Socialism.³⁵⁵ In this novel, Sheldon’s protagonist makes the following remark:

Christian Socialism believes in the common ownership or control of all the world’s great necessities . . . Such common necessities as ice, bread,

³⁵³ Cf. David W. Miller, God at Work: The History and Promise of the Faith at Work Movement (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 34.

³⁵⁴ Kenda Creasy Dean, Practicing Passion: Youth and the Quest for a Passionate Church (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 2004), 46.

³⁵⁵ Charles M. Sheldon, The Heart of the World: A Story of Christian Socialism, (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1905).

milk, medicine, etc., could easily be furnished to all people at cost, under an intelligent, loving, social order which was really Christian.³⁵⁶

Sheldon's protagonist clarifies the idea of supplying "common necessities" at "cost" by discussing how a gas company currently charges the poor higher rates because they use less gas than the wealthy. "In a Christian social order a man's need of a common necessity would be a larger factor to consider in the matter of the price charged him for it."³⁵⁷ At this point, the protagonist moves far beyond individual Christian influence to social-political policy.

In general, Christian Socialism would socialize all common needs . . . We have already socialized the post-office, the public schools, the fire department, the lighting and heating of town and cities, the common railroads, the public buildings, the public parks, and many other forms of public need.³⁵⁸

Sheldon ultimately envisions a society where genuine human needs take precedence over profits. He is envisioning the distribution of things like shelter, food, medicine and utilities in a new paradigm.

I have made this excursus through the American sickness funds and the social gospel to show that the predecessors of today's conservative Christians were far more socially progressive than their successors. A social consciousness permeated both the establishment of sickness funds and the social gospel advocates. What brought the social gospel efforts in relation to health care to failure? What happened to the initiatives to establish associations for the relief and support of sick workers? What caused Twentieth

³⁵⁶ Sheldon, Heart of the World, 116.

³⁵⁷ Sheldon, Heart of the World, 117.

³⁵⁸ Sheldon, Heart of the World, 117.

Century Christianity to abdicate their predecessors' concern for the poor, inclusion of the penniless, and emphasis on goodwill to all people? An answer lies in the political turmoil of World War I with the penchant for Americans to vilify their enemy's accomplishments and the shifting economic burden of sickness from the need to insure lost income to the need to cover the soaring costs of health care. The voluntary beneficiary societies' sickness benefits simply could not keep up with the burgeoning costs of medical care.

Prior to World War I, Americans tended to consider the compulsory sick insurance in Germany in a positive light. In 1908, Charles Henderson praised the German social policy while contrasting it with the American experience:

When a workman must appeal to charity, he is slow to ask for medical aid; frequently he will conceal his illness from his family and even try to conceal it from himself until it is too late, simply because he will not go to a charity hospital or dispensary. In Germany a workman knows that he has a legal right, without charity, to medical advice and help, and he reports promptly when anything is wrong with his body, and so his chances of cure are greater, his time lost from work is less, and he is in much less danger of infecting others if his disease is contagious in character.³⁵⁹

Trade association publications in America also praised and called for an insurance system based on the German model. In the Machinists' Monthly Journal, Olga Nethersole says, "We want a Compulsory Workers' Insurance law which should cover sickness, accident, invalidity and old-age pension, and it should be a Federal law. The German Empire is

³⁵⁹ Charles Henderson, "The German Social Policy," Chautauquan 52 (November, 1908): 403 of 397-407.

ahead of the other civilized countries of the world in this matter.”³⁶⁰ Similar sentiment arose from the National Association of Manufacturers³⁶¹ and the Brotherhood of Railroad Trainmen.³⁶² The sentiment of William Hard shows the positive appraisal of Germany’s

Compulsory Insurance:

The German Compulsory Insurance Law is a good law, not only because it hands out coin and medical supplies at convenient times to injured workmen, but because it sets the face of the whole German nation habitually toward preventing the crippling and mangling of human beings, toward healing the wounds of those who, in spite of precautions, have been overtaken by the bloody misfortunes of peace, toward lessening of pain, toward spreading happiness.³⁶³

William Hard continues by contrasting the German system with America’s litigious system: “Under Compulsory Insurance the remedy for an accident is to get the worker on his feet . . . Under Employer’s Liability the remedy for an accident is to start a lawsuit.”³⁶⁴

Praise for Germany’s Compulsory Insurance was short lived in America. With the entrance of the U.S. into World War I, opponents to compulsory insurance vilified the concept as un-American. In 1917, Jesse Phillips, the president of the National Convention of Insurance Commissioners said:

³⁶⁰ Olga Nethersole, “Life is Our Right, Work is Our Privilege,” Machinists’ Monthly Journal 22 (1910): 238-239 of 237-240.

³⁶¹ Cf. D. A. Tompkins, *et al*, “Employers’ Liability and Industrial Indemnity,” American Industries: The Manufacturers’ Magazine 10, no. 7 (1910): 23-26.

³⁶² William Tolman, “The Prevention of Accidents and Compensation,” The Railroad Trainman 27 (1910): 922-924.

³⁶³ William Hard, “Pensioners of Peace,” Everybody’s Magazine 19 (1908): 523 of 522-533.

³⁶⁴ Hard, 523f.

The doctrine of so-called social insurance, which means compulsory insurance, is not the product of American thought or the development of American ideals. It springs from autocracy; it had its origin more than thirty years ago in Germany, whose system of government to-day is obnoxious to more than two-thirds of the civilized world.³⁶⁵

Similar anti-German sentiments occurred in the resolutions of the New York Osteopathic Society in 1919, “reciting that it is un-American and distinctly Prussian in principle.”³⁶⁶

In 1919, The Illinois Medical Journal ran an article by Le Roy Philip Kuhn opposing compulsory insurance. Kuhn says, “The whole propaganda is un-American, suggesting the iron hand.”³⁶⁷ An even more bombastic attack on the idea of compulsory health insurance appears in the Long Island Medical Journal:

Compulsory Health Insurance is an Un-American, Unsafe, Uneconomic, Unscientific, Unfair and Unscrupulous type of Legislation . . . whose advocates and supporters were found to be the same group of Paid Professional Philanthropists, busybody Social Workers, Misguided Clergymen and Hysterical women (none of them with knowledge of or sympathy with the needs of working people).³⁶⁸

³⁶⁵ Jesse S. Phillips, “National Convention of Insurance Commissioners,” The American Underwriter Magazine and Insurance Review 48, no. 3 (1917): 71.

³⁶⁶“Oppose Health Insurance,” The Journal of the American Osteopathic Association 19, no. 9 (1920): 329.

³⁶⁷ Le Roy Philip Kuhn, “Compulsory Health Insurance,” Illinois Medical Journal 33, no. 1 (1918): 37 of 36-40.

³⁶⁸ John J. A. O’Rielly, “Compulsory Health Insurance,” Long Island Medical Journal 13, no. 12 (1919): 445 of 444-448.

The same author further vilifies the supporters of compulsory insurance by suggesting their German connection as “the smug *Uplifters*, pungent with the odor of mock sanctity to cover the stench of the infamous *Kultur* whence this foul legislation sprung.”³⁶⁹

The vilification of compulsory health care as “German” or “Prussian” established a *modus operandi* for attacking subsequent efforts at nationalized health care. Through the years, opponents to a national health care policy have attached various un-American labels to proponents for health care legislation. Beatrix Hoffman says, “After the 1917 Russian Revolution, anti-German sentiment increasingly became conflated with the newest threats to Americanism: Bolshevism and domestic radicalism.”³⁷⁰ With the end of the Cold War, opponents to health care shifted the vilification of socialized medicine to America’s allies in Canada and Britain.

Opposition still emphasized the foreignness of universal health care, but this time it was not the United State’s enemies but allies whose health insurance systems were condemned. Tales abounded of British or Canadian citizens forced to wait endlessly for surgery or other-life-saving measures under their nations’ rigid health care bureaucracies.³⁷¹

Opponents to a national health care policy consistently characterize the Canadian and British policies as un-American originating with leftist subversives who promote big government and state-ism.³⁷²

³⁶⁹ O’Rielly, 447.

³⁷⁰ Beatrix Hoffman, The Wages of Sickness: The Politics of Health Insurance in Progressive America (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001), 66.

³⁷¹ Hoffman, Wages of Sickness, 186.

³⁷² Cf. Colin Gordon, Dead on Arrival: The Politics of Health Care in Twentieth-Century America (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2003), 150.

The vilification of a national health policy as un-American during World War I became a part of the larger politics of normalcy in the 1920s. President Harding's campaign slogan ("America's present need is not heroics but healing; not nostrums but normalcy; not revolution but restoration. . .") set the tone for inactivity on social policies like a national health policy. Normalcy in the 1920s was antagonistic to progressive era politics and the Social Gospel.

By 1920 the nerves of the country had been rubbed raw by acrimony over the war, the debate on the League, the Red Scare, and postwar inflation . . . The Wilson years climaxed a long era of muckraking, of harping upon the evils of society. A good number of Americans yearned for release from the preaching of the reformers and the demands they made for altruism and self-sacrifice.³⁷³

In the atmosphere of normalcy, the Social Gospel entered a time of decline. Charles Brown's assessment of the time is accurate: "As the reform spirit of Progressive politics yielded to complacent 'normalcy' of the 1920s, the Social Gospel lost direction as well as influence, surviving only among some clergy, settlement workers, and denominational bureaucrats."³⁷⁴

The beneficiary societies and their sickness funds hit hard times during the American era of normalcy. Sickness funds developed in the progressive era to address lost wages as the most pressing need arising from illness. However, the economic burden of sickness was shifting from covering lost wages to paying medical expenses.

³⁷³ William Edward Leuchtenburg, The Perils of Prosperity, 1914-1932 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993): 84.

³⁷⁴ Charles Calvin Brown, Niebuhr and His Age: Reinhold Niebuhr's Prophetic Role and Legacy (Harrisburg: Trinity Press International, 2002), 24.

By the 1920s the sickness risk itself was undergoing a major transformation. Specifically, health care was supplanting lost income as the major cost of sickness. Whereas the risk of income loss focused on the male-breadwinner, any family member could incur health-care costs for physician's services, hospital beds and diagnostic services, and drugs.³⁷⁵

Sickness funds replacing lost wages could not keep up with the burgeoning cost of health care itself. Group plans, like Blue Cross, which started in Dallas at Baylor University in 1929, addressed the rising cost of health care by paying for medical service and hospitalization. The era of benevolent sickness funds was at an end. "By developing better actuarial technology through 1920s and 1930s, commercial insurers achieved their eventual dominance over the mutual benefit societies."³⁷⁶

I end my excursion through benevolent associations and the social gospel at a bleak point because modern Christians who decry socialized medicine have abrogated the critique of the centralization of power that is evident in the Deuteronomistic history. While they call for America to return to God, they ignore that ancient Israel's monarchy was an attempt to secure the welfare of the people. Hinton's work, like modern Christianity, misses the social reality of health and wellness. While he addresses how the sick contribute to society, he fails to consider how society should seek to establish structures that promote the welfare and health of all. Hinton and modern American Christianity would benefit from a reconsideration of the social outlook of the monarchial

³⁷⁵ George Emory and J.C. Herbert Emery, A Young Man's Benefit: The Independent Order of Odd Fellows and Sickness Insurance in the United States and Canada, 1860-1929 (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1999), 99.

³⁷⁶ Murray, Origins of American Health Insurance, 236.

period. Suffering is ultimately a social issue that requires a social, not simply a personal, solution.

B. The Hebrew Bible: Early Hebrew Corporality

Ancient Hebrew understandings of the individual were unlike many modern Western conceptions. The early Hebrew conception of personhood emphasized the communal connectedness of the individual. Unlike some modern emphases on individuals as autonomous, self-responsible, and self-sufficient, personhood in its ancient Hebrew context wraps the individual's social identity within kin, clan and confederacy. Modern interest in Hebrew corporate personality started with the groundbreaking article by H. Wheeler Robinson.³⁷⁷ While Robinson overstates the idea of Hebrew corporate personality, his groundbreaking work became fertile ground for scholars to explore Hebrew social conceptions of the individual as part of the community.³⁷⁸ Robert Di Vito calls this social understanding of the individual as “the embedding of the individual.”³⁷⁹ The result of understanding the individual as embedded in the community is a linkage of the individual's fate with the community's fate and *vice versa*. In the Hebrew scripture, the fate of the individual as embedded in the community works both positively and negatively. Positively, the family redeems individuals who are enslaved because of debt (Lev. 25:47-55); the clan avenges the wrongful murder of the individual (Numbers 35:19); levirate marriage assures the continuation of an individual's lineage

³⁷⁷ H. Wheeler Robinson, "The Hebrew Conception of Corporate Personality," Werden und Wesen des Alten Testament, Beiheft zur Zeitschrift für die Alttestamentliche Wissenschaft, 66 (1936): 49-62.

³⁷⁸ Cf. Daniel G. Powers, Salvation through Participation: An Examination of the Notion of the Believers' Corporate Unity with Christ in Early Christian Soteriology (Leuven: Peeters, 2001), 13ff.

³⁷⁹ Robert A. Di Vito, "Old Testament Anthropology and the Construction of Personal Identity," The Catholic Biblical Quarterly 61, no. 2 (April, 1999): 221.

(Deuteronomy 25:5f.), and family lands must be redeemed by a kinsman to maintain the family estate for the welfare of all individuals (Lev. 25:25). Negatively, the incorporation of the individual within kin, clan and confederacy can result in the suffering of the individual, family, clan or confederacy. Examples of such suffering include Yahweh's punishing children for the sins of parents (Exodus 20:5, Exodus 34:6 and Ezekiel 18:1-3), whole families suffering for an individual's guilt as in the stories concerning Achan (Josh. 7) and Saul (2 Sam 21), and cities that are destroyed for immorality or murder (Deut. 13:15). Most of these concepts of the individual's embeddedness within kin, clan and confederacy arise from the post monarchical period. Individuals now function as the focal point of their respective social groups, much as the kings during the monarchical period. We can easily see in this Hebrew conception of the embeddedness of the individual some of the components of our triad, namely beneficence and suffering. Individuals benefit from their embeddedness, but the individual can also suffer because of their incorporation within kin, clan and confederacy. Individual deification is lacking in many of the texts cited in relation to corporate personality. However, the standards of conduct as the ethical demands of Yahweh function as an extrinsic way to show the character of the individual, kin, clan and confederacy. Some rare individuals, however, receive a sort of incipient deification such as the first humans at creation, Enoch, Jacob, Joseph and Moses. We must now briefly explore the incipient deification of these individuals in the Hebrew scripture.

There are embryonic elements of the deification of individuals in the stories of the Pentateuch. The first creation story portrays God creating humans in the Divine image (Gen. 1:27). The significance that God makes humanity in the divine image is an

interpretive quagmire. Brevard Childs says, "The history of modern exegesis demonstrates convincingly how a consensus regarding its meaning only momentarily emerges which is then shortly dissolved into newer forms of dissension."³⁸⁰ Dissensions that have been overcome by modern biblical scholars surround older interpretations that would portray the divine image as an anthropological partition between the spiritual and physical dimensions of humanity and the idea that the image was lost as a result of the fall.³⁸¹ However, interpreters seem perplexed to locate the history of the tradition of the divine image. Some scholars root the concept in ancient language of kingship where the king is the divine representative. Levenson uses this approach in his interpretation of Genesis 1:27 and insists that "the human race is YHWH's plenipotentiary, his stand-in."³⁸² Walter Brueggemann admits the possibility of this interpretation but adds the important element that the divine image is also a communal idea according to the text because both the singular ("he created him") and plural ("he created them") are used. Thus, Brueggemann says, "Only in community of humankind is God reflected. God is, according to this bold affirmation, not mirrored as an individual but as a community."³⁸³ Thus, humans represent and reflect the divine only in a communal and societal way. In terms of our nexus, the idea of humanity as created in the divine image suggests that deification must be understood in terms of social beneficence. Tikvah Frymer-Kensky rightly sees this beneficiary role of humans in the divine image as touching the whole

³⁸⁰ Brevard Childs, Biblical Theology of the Old and New Testaments: Theological Reflection on the Christian Bible (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1993), 567.

³⁸¹ Childs, 569.

³⁸² Jon Douglas Levenson, Creation and the Persistence of Evil: The Jewish Drama of Divine Omnipotence (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994), 114.

³⁸³ Walter Brueggemann, Genesis: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 32-34.

cosmos. In the image of God, humankind is “the avatar of God on earth, the one who keeps everything going properly. This is humanity’s proper human role in the cosmos.”³⁸⁴ By way of summary, we may say that humanity communally represents God in the cosmos. Deification and social beneficence are implicit in the priestly creation story (P).

Enoch is another individual described with the language of deification. The account of his ascension in Gen 5:24 contains an implicit “deification of Enoch.”³⁸⁵ However, the biblical text concerning Enoch is brief and terse. All that we see in the biblical Enoch is his close association with God and his absence when God takes him. We should note that scholars have long recognized that the character of Enoch in the priestly tradition (P) aligns with Mesopotamian sources concerning Enmeduranki, the legendary king of Sippar.³⁸⁶ For our purposes, I simply want to point out that Enmeduranki in the Mesopotamian sources enters the divine assembly, is enthroned on “a large throne of gold,” receives instruction on divinization, and teaches the art to the people of Nippur, Sippar and Babylon.³⁸⁷ Enmeduranki’s instruction of the three towns resulted in a privileged status for these cities as evidenced in other documents of the

³⁸⁴ Tikva Simone Frymer-Kensky, Studies in Bible and Feminist Criticism (Philadelphia: Jewish Publication Society, 2006), 356.

³⁸⁵ James R. Davila, “Of Methodology, Monotheism and Metatron: Introductory Reflections on Divine Mediators and the Origins of Worship of Jesus,” The Jewish Roots of Christological Monotheism, Eds. Carey C. Newman, *et al* (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 11.

³⁸⁶ Cf. Samuel Rolles Driver, The Book of Genesis (London: Methuen & Co., 1904), 78; James VanderKam, From Revelation to Canon: Studies in the Hebrew Bible and Second Temple Literature (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 305-306.

³⁸⁷ W. G. Lambert, “Enmeduranki and Related Matters,” Journal of Cuneiform Studies 21 (1967): 132 of 126-138.

period.³⁸⁸ Thus, behind the Enoch of the Bible is the tradition of Enmeduranki's deification and social beneficence.

Other stories of the Pentateuch also contain deification but add the element of suffering to the individuals' social embeddedness. These cases involve a suffering individual who benefits society while being described in the language of deification. Genesis 32:23-33 portrays Jacob wrestling, prevailing and subsequently injured in an all night battle with a divine being at Jabbok.³⁸⁹ Richard Elliott Friedman traces the motif of God's growing absence in the biblical account as well as in modern thought. Friedman argues that the growing tradition of God's absence shifts the responsibility of the maintenance of the world's wellbeing onto humans. Jacob reflects this shift in God's declining role among humans. "Adam disobeys God. Abraham questions God. Jacob fights God. Humans are confronting their creator, and they are increasing their participation in the arena of divine prerogatives."³⁹⁰ Such thinking that humans might actually take on the role of revealing the divine in creation fits our exploration of deification, suffering and beneficence. We should note that in this story we find deification (Jacob prevailing in the struggle with a divine being), suffering (Jacob's crippling wound), and beneficence (the naming of Israel and an explanation of food taboo as a characteristic of the descendants of Jacob for perpetuity) as a result of the suffering.

Joseph is another character who possesses something of an embryonic deification. His dreams, a form of divine revelation, lead to his brothers' dislike of him. When they

³⁸⁸ Lambert, 127.

³⁸⁹ For a complete survey of the interpretations of this text see Pol Vonck's "The Crippling Victory: the story of Jacob's Struggle at the River Jabbok (Genesis 32:23-33)," African Ecclesial Review 23, no. 1-2 (April, 1984): 75-87.

³⁹⁰ Richard Elliott Friedman, The Disappearance of God: A Divine Mystery (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1995), 37-38

sell him into slavery, he ultimately becomes vice regent to Pharaoh who recognizes him as possessing the spirit of God. Thomas L. Brodie recognizes the incipient deification of Joseph:

As well as suggesting a pampered boy and a shepherd prophet, the figure of Joseph evokes yet a third level, that of God. In general God is rarely mentioned in the Joseph narrative, but God is present in other ways including, partly, in the figure of Joseph. This God-related aspect of Joseph helps explain why the second dream – the sun, moon, and stars bowing before Joseph – “teeters on the brink of blasphemy.” The reason it is not blasphemous is that ultimately the bowing is before God.³⁹¹

Again, we should note that Joseph encompasses the three qualities of our redemptive nexus: Joseph suffers at the hands’ of his brothers, becomes a slave in Egypt, and finds himself wrongly imprisoned because of Potipher and his wife. However, Joseph’s suffering results in beneficence. His relatives and all of Egypt benefit from this suffering figure. The moral of the Joseph cycle is that what others intend as evil for Joseph ultimately benefits Joseph’s family and even Egypt (Genesis 50:20).

Moses is also portrayed in the Hebrew Bible in a deified way. As early as the calling of Moses, God promises that Aaron shall speak for Moses because of Moses’ objection about his inability to speak. Exodus 4:16 announces, “He (Aaron) shall be a mouth for you, and you shall be to him as God.” Similar language occurs in Exodus 7:1: “And the Lord said to Moses, “See, I make you as God to Pharaoh; and Aaron your brother shall be your prophet.” Terence E. Fretheim says that these texts suggest that

³⁹¹ Thomas L. Brodie, Genesis as Dialogue: A Literary, Historical, and Theological Commentary (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 358.

“Moses becomes a vehicle for divine immanence.”³⁹² In light of Exodus 7:1 and Psalm 82, Baruch A. Levine says that Moses holds a position of intimacy with God that is “normally associated with God’s entourage or heavenly household.”³⁹³ Clair Gottlieb says that Exodus 4:16 is “the first indication of the apotheosis of Moses.”³⁹⁴ Indeed, other elements of the Exodus story reveal Moses’ divine characterization. After Moses ascends the mountain to meet with God, the people are afraid to approach him because of his “horns,” which many versions translate as “his face shone” (Ex. 34:29, 30 and 35). Gottlieb associates Moses’ horns with “the tradition of the horned god” in antiquity.³⁹⁵ Another indication of Moses’ deified status is the unique fact that he is the only person in the Hebrew Bible from whom God asks permission. While Moses is on the mountain with God, the people and Aaron have made the golden calf. God announces their evil to Moses and says in Exodus 32:10, “Now therefore let me alone, so that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them; and you I will make a great nation.” Donald Gowan astutely remarks about the uniqueness of this request in the Hebrew Bible: “In each case someone who has power to do something to another is asked to refrain. Only once, in the Bible, is God the one affected, as he asks of a human being, ‘Let me alone, that. . . .’ Who would dare to write such a thing?”³⁹⁶ What becomes even more daring is that Moses disobeys God’s request, and throughout Exodus 32-34, Moses

³⁹² Terence E. Fretheim, The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984), 151.

³⁹³ Baruch A. Levine, The Anchor Bible: Numbers 1-20: A New Translation with Introduction and Commentary (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 331.

³⁹⁴ Claire Gottlieb, “Will the Real Moses Please Step Forward,” Jewish Studies at the turn of the Twentieth Century (Leiden: Brill, 1999), 127.

³⁹⁵ Gottlieb, 129.

³⁹⁶ Donald E. Gowan, Theology in Exodus: Biblical Theology in the Form of a Commentary (Nashville: Westminster John Knox, 1994), 223.

argues, contends, barter and banter with God to remain with the people. For our purposes, the deification of Moses closely links social beneficence with his deified status. God is ready to give up on the Exodus project, but deified Moses brings God to repentance (Ex. 33:14). We have seen Moses' deification and the social beneficence associated with it, but do we find anything of Moses suffering? The suffering Moses is a theme that many see in the tradition of the Deuteronomist. Moses in this tradition is a "vicarious sufferer who is denied access to the Promised Land because of the sin of the people (Deut. 1:37; 3:23-28; 4:21-22)."³⁹⁷ I would add that we should not forget that intimately entwined with Moses' status as god to Aaron (Ex. 4:16) is the fact that Moses suffers with a speech problem. His deification rests on his own impediment of speech.³⁹⁸

To summarize our examination of the triad of deification, social beneficence and suffering within early portrayals of Hebrew corporality, we can conclude with several observations. First, the embedding of the individual within kin, clan and confederacy reveals that suffering and benefits are communal in context for both the good and the ill of the social group. Second, several figures in the Pentateuch are characterized as possessing a deified status. In the cases of Jacob, Joseph and Moses, these individuals also contribute to the benefit of their communal context. Even their suffering benefits the people with whom they are embedded as divine agents. We will now turn our attention

³⁹⁷ Cf. John Van Seters, The Life of Moses (Leuven: Peeters Publishers), 462.

³⁹⁸ Gregory Glazov, in The Bridling of the Tongue and the Opening of the Mouth in Biblical Prophecy (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 2001), 103, discusses the variety of interpretations relating to Moses' speech difficulty including "lack of knowledge, linguistic disability, medical impediment, moral failing, numinous fear, expression of humility" and "general insecurity." I would argue that God's response to Moses using further language of disability suggests that the disability interpretation is correct.

to the democratization of deification, social beneficence and suffering as it develops further.

C. The Hebrew Bible: The Democratization of Sacrality

In the monarchial period of the Hebrew bible, the king stood as God's representative for society. With the collapse of Judah at the hands of the Babylonians and the attending demise of the monarchy, a new vision of sacrality formed within the exilic and post-exilic periods. To be sure, elements of the older view of sacrality gave rise to messianic hopes, but, alongside such expectations, a view of sacrality arose that extended the king's privileged position of divine representative to a broader spectrum of people. We must now trace some of the elements of this democratized sacrality to see how it relates to our triad of deification, suffering and beneficence. We shall examine the new developments within the Hebrew bible by focusing on three theological developments that move beyond the sacralized worldview of the monarchy. I call these developments the prophetic mirror, the transferring of royal prestige and the laicization of sacrality. We shall not concern ourselves with the messianic hopes that arose in this period because in many ways these hopes were a desire to continue the sacrality of the monarchy. In light of early Hebrew corporality and the democratization of sacrality, Hinton's vague elucidation of how the sufferer benefits others requires an expansion. The tradition enriches Hinton's vagueness with its rich illustrations of how suffering individuals serendipitously benefit others. We will suggest a further possible example from Hinton's practice of medicine and modern clinical trials as an instance of the serendipitous way that suffering individuals benefit others.

Scholars have noticed that something new occurred in the prophetic literature that was absent in earlier expressions of the Hebrew understanding of God. While this development may predate the exilic and post-exilic periods, its influence is important for understanding the developments that lead to a desacralization of monarchical concepts. As we have noted, monarchical ideology viewed the world as rising and falling with the king's welfare. A suffering king was indicative of societal difficulty. The prophets bring confusion upon this well organized worldview through the prophetic mirror. Abraham Joshua Heschel speaking of Hosea says that the prophet's "personal fate was a mirror of the divine pathos, that his sorrow echoed the sorrow of God."³⁹⁹ Far from, a well-organized worldview where God works via the king for the good or ill of society, the prophets suggest that things are not as orderly as first believed. Indeed, the prophets even dare to suggest that suffering and pain touch God. The idea that God experiences suffering and pain is a new idea that arose in the prophetic tradition as the prophets seriously contemplated the catastrophe in store for Israel and Judah. The idea of the prophetic mirror suits our purposes in this chapter because it allows us to consider the prophets as individuals whose ministry displays elements of deification, suffering and societal beneficence. In what follows, we shall explore how the prophetic mirror reveals the elements of our redemptive nexus and explore two examples from the prophetic literature.

Deification, suffering and societal beneficence are readily recognizable in Heschel's discussion of the prophets. The prophets become in themselves and through their message a mirror of God and especially a mirror of the divine pain. They, thus,

³⁹⁹ Abraham Joshua Heschel, The Prophets (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2001), 69.

illustrate the elements of suffering and deification in a special way. Heschel says, “The prophet is a person who is inwardly transformed: his interior life is formed by the pathos of God, it is *theomorphic*. Sympathy, which takes place for the sake of the divine will, and which a divine concern becomes human passion, is fulfillment of transcendence.”⁴⁰⁰ However, Heschel is careful to point out that this *theomorphic* transformation of the prophet is not an obliteration of the selfhood of the prophet:

In sympathy we find an identity between the private and the divine; the prophet is not really fused with the divine, he is but identifying himself emotionally with the divine pathos. It is a unity of will and emotion, of consciousness and message.⁴⁰¹

The reason for such a *theomorphic* transformation is the beneficence of society. Heschel insists that such beneficence distinguishes prophetic experience from mere religious experience. He says,

Religious experience, in most cases, is a private affair in which a person becomes alive to what transpires between God and someone else; contact between God and man comes about, it is believed, for the benefit of the particular man. In contrast, prophetic inspiration is for the sake, for benefit, of a third party. It is not a private affair between prophet and God; its purpose is the illumination of the people rather than the illumination of the prophet.⁴⁰²

Thus, Heschel’s understanding of the prophetic experience squarely fits our exploration of suffering, deification and beneficence. The prophet undergoes a *theomorphic* transformation in which his life becomes a reflection of the divine pathos for the good of

⁴⁰⁰ Heschel, 409.

⁴⁰¹ Heschel, 409.

⁴⁰² Heschel, 258.

his society. We will now explore two examples from the Hebrew scripture of this prophetic experience.

We have already alluded to Heschel's discussion of Hosea functioning as a mirror of the divine pathos. In the book of Hosea, the preeminent way that this occurs is by metaphors that explore the perspective of the divine as spouse and parent.⁴⁰³

Numerous debates occur amongst scholars concerning the significance of the marriage metaphor in Hosea 1-3 including historical considerations of Canaanite cultic prostitution and fertility, redactional layers within the text, the morality of God, the portrayal of women, and more.⁴⁰⁴ Our concern with the text limits itself to how the text in its final state blends Hosea and God. While the interpretation of the book of Hosea is enigmatic, the depictions of God as a spurned spouse and a parent of wayward children are theologically profound because it introduces into the human understanding of God tensions heretofore reserved to the experience of humans. These divine tensions introduced by Hosea in the eighth century fly in the face of the ordered world of sacral kingship. Instead of the sovereign God of sacral kingship, Hosea presents a God spurned by his lover, who yet pines for the lover's return. Samuel Terrien describes such a portrayal of God as scandalous:

⁴⁰³ Gale Yee structures the whole book of Hosea around the metaphors of marriage and parenthood: Hosea 1-3 features the spousal metaphor; Hosea 4-11 features the parent-child metaphor, and Hosea 12-14 returns to the spousal metaphor in "Hosea," The Women's Bible Commentary, ed. Carol Newsom and Sharon Ringe (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 207.

⁴⁰⁴ I will try to cast the Hosea material in inclusive language when possible. Walter Brueggemann's caution about the metaphors in Hosea is worth remembering: "While such metaphors seem irreplaceable as means whereby the intimate connectedness is voiced, we are now increasingly aware of the problems of sexism and abusive patriarchy that are inherent in the imagery" (Theology of the Old Testament: Testimony, Dispute, Advocacy [Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1997], 299).

Hosea himself, in the middle of the eighth century, could picture the pathos of a frustrated deity not only under the scandalous image of a deceived husband (1:2-7; 2:13), but also in the equally scandalous image of parental love which finds only rebuttal. According to the mentality of the time, the spectacle of a powerless father was as shocking as that of a village cuckold.⁴⁰⁵

Why would Hosea portray God in such a scandalous way? Martin Buber suggests that it serves to preserve the idea of human theomorphism. He says, "All this is indeed very anthropomorphic, but I think that if Hosea had to explain the matter to us in terms of our conceptions, he would say that theomorphism of man, that is to say, the fact of God's image in him, has been preserved only by God's own becoming anthropomorphous over and over again in such manner."⁴⁰⁶ Ulrich Mauser voices the same insight in his theological investigation of Hosea:

The anthropomorphic mode of speech about Yahweh aims at portraying God's condescension to human history, to his participation in that history, and to his sharing of the human condition. At the same time, the prophet of Israel is depicted in a remarkably theomorphic fashion in that his life story as a man becomes, at least partially, a representation of God by participation in God's condition. Human life is consequently understood as an image of God which in turn presupposes a concept of the divine in which Yahweh is so essentially God for and with Israel that the human is lodged in him.⁴⁰⁷

⁴⁰⁵ Samuel Terrien, Till the Heart Sings: A Biblical Theology of Manhood and Womenhood, foreword by Phyllis Trible (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2004), 56.

⁴⁰⁶ Martin Buber, The Prophetic Faith, trans. by Carlyle Witton-Davies (New York: Macmillan Company, 1949), 113.

⁴⁰⁷ Ulrich Mauser, "Image of God and Incarnation," Interpretation 24 (July, 1970): 355.

Thus, Hosea scandalizes the conception of God and takes upon himself the sacral function of representing God to the people. Far from the sacral ideology of cosmic order via the king's wellbeing, Hosea presents God touched by pain and the prophet functioning as a "living monstrosity of the divine reality."⁴⁰⁸ Our triad of deification, suffering and beneficence appear now in terms of the theomorphic prophet whose suffering reflects the pathos of God and serves to call the people to a genuine knowledge of God (*da'ath elohim*).

Another prophet who shows a theomorphic transformation that fits our investigation is Jeremiah whose ministry occurs in Judah in the sixth century B.C.E. The theomorphic transformation of Jeremiah also shows the blending of the individual prophet with the divine pathos in an intriguing way. Kathleen O'Connor captures the idea of theomorphic transformation in her discussion of the "lamentation and weeping" in Jeremiah:

In two poems (8:18-21; 9:1-3), the weeping figures of Jeremiah and God become indistinguishable. "O that my head were a spring of water, and my eyes a fountain of tears, so that I might weep day and night for the slain of my poor people" (9:1). This merging of the two figures is a poetic device to show the prophet speaks and acts for God. God cries out, "My joy is gone, grief is upon me, my heart is sick" (8:18). "For the hurt of my poor people I am hurt, I mourn, and dismay has taken hold of me" (8:21). God is not distant from the people's suffering in these poems of weeping; God identifies with them. The people's pain is God's pain.⁴⁰⁹

⁴⁰⁸ Cf. Terence E. Fretheim, The Suffering of God: An Old Testament Perspective (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1984), 156.

⁴⁰⁹ Kathleen O'Connor, "Jeremiah," Women's Bible Commentary, ed. Carol Ann Newsom and Sharon Ringe (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 184.

Timothy Polk's analysis of Jeremiah emphasizes that the voice of the people is indistinguishable from the blended voices of God and Jeremiah. Thus, "through his first-person speech Jeremiah enacts a prophetic identity of identification with God and people."⁴¹⁰ The theological significance of the blending of the prophet's voice with God and the people is that it moves away from the mere reciprocity of Deuteronomic theology.

The book of Jeremiah, however, cannot be completely understood by simple reference to a notion of covenant violation and covenant curse, the central assumptions of Deuteronomic theology. Along with the paradigm of covenant, the book of Jeremiah affirms another theological claim, *the pathos of Yahweh*. In spite of Israel's obduracy and recalcitrance, Yahweh nonetheless wills a continuing relation with Israel. This will is rooted in nothing other than God's inexplicable yearning, which is articulated in Jeremiah as God's pathos, presented in turn through the pathos of the poet.⁴¹¹

Jeremiah, as God's stand-in, reveals a new theological dimension that moves us away from the static theology of sacral kingship where a well-ordered cosmos exists because of the king's well-being. In Jeremiah, we discover that pain and suffering even touch God, but the significance of this divine pathos is that it creates future possibilities for God's people beyond the crisis of Judah's failed monarchy and exile. Jeremiah's identification with the people acts as the anchor to which the blended voices of the prophet and God

⁴¹⁰ Timothy Polk, *The Prophetic Persona: Jeremiah and the Language of the Self* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1984), 126.

⁴¹¹ Walter Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming* (Grand Rapids, Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1998), 4-5.

converge. As Jeremiah reflects God, he stands in what Ernst Simon calls “critical identification” with the people.⁴¹²

This is critical identification. One can be the sharpest critic of one’s people yet remain fully identified with it and wish to share its life and tasks. At the end of the volume which deals with the destruction of the Second Temple by the Romans in the year 70 C.E., Heinrich Graetz (1817-1891) asked why Jeremiah, who had predicted the destruction of the First Temple, had been accepted by the Jewish people as a true prophet, while Flavius Josephus, who quoted one of Jeremiah’s speeches when he was standing among the Roman legions before the walls of Jerusalem that were besieged by Titus and Vespasian, was considered a traitor, despite the fact that his warnings, too, had come true. Graetz’s answer was, “Jeremiah spoke from within; Josephus spoke from the tent of the Roman general.” Where you stand when you speak – that makes all the difference. It makes either for identification or for lack of it.⁴¹³

Jeremiah uniquely stands between God and the people. We can briefly summarize that Jeremiah undergoes theomorphic transformation, or deification, as his suffering reflects God’s suffering within the locus of his community. In mirroring God’s suffering within himself, Jeremiah’s critical identification with the people produces the theological possibility that the people will transcend the failure of the monarchy and the crisis of exile. Suffering, deification and societal beneficence uniquely blend in the prophetic picture presented by Jeremiah.

⁴¹² Ernst Simon, “The Way of the Law: Law and Observance in Jewish Experience,” Judaism Transcends Catastrophe: God Torah, and Israel beyond the Holocaust, ed. Jacob Neusner (Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1996), 128.

⁴¹³ Simon, 128-129.

Hosea and Jeremiah undercut the ordered worldview of sacral kingship by suggesting that suffering touches God. This astounding theological move sets the stage for what I call the shifting of royal prestige in Judaism. With the fall of Jerusalem in 587 B.C.E. and the fact that the monarchy never revived, many changes came over the theology relating to the monarchy. For our purposes, I will mention four changes that arose from this time. These theological developments include the rise of eschatological messianism, the attribution of royal prestige to the priesthood, the democratization of sacral privilege, and a new interest in intermediary spiritual beings.

As I have already mentioned, eschatological messianism tends to be a projection of sacral kingship into a future idealized figure. The failed monarchy gave rise to eschatology and messianic expectation. We shall not concern ourselves with these developments because the messianic figures of Judaism are victorious figures. Judaism, apart from Christianity, shows no development of a suffering messiah. This is readily visible in Targum of Isaiah from the Tannaitic period.⁴¹⁴ In the Targum of Isaiah, where the writer interprets the text in messianic language, the messiah is victorious, and suffering falls upon the gentiles and the wicked. Here we find traditional monarchial theology where the anointed king's beneficence depends on success and victory.

However, not all Judaism was content to wait for a restoral of the monarchy. In some cases, royal prestige seems to shift to the priesthood in the absence of a legitimate monarch. In the Pentateuch, the Priestly (P) source has an anointed priesthood (Lev. 4:3, 5, 16; 6:22). The postexilic work of Chronicles reflects the growing prestige of the priesthood in the significance given to the temple. Schneidewind argues that the

⁴¹⁴ Bruce P. Chilton, The Isaiah Targum: Introduction, Translation, Apparatus and Notes (Wilmington: Michael Glazier, 1987), 105.

Chronicler's redaction of 2 Samuel 7:16, the Dynastic Oracle, now promises an eternal kingship and temple which gives rise to a bicephalic leadership of priest and monarch.⁴¹⁵ Jeremiah 33:19-22 also reflects a similar theology in its promise of God's faithfulness to both monarchy and priesthood. Clearly, the tenor of the promise reflects an exilic or postexilic time.⁴¹⁶ A text, which raises the priesthood to royal proportions, is Zech. 6:9-15. While there is a messianic expectation, for the time being, Joshua, the high priest, is crowned (v.11). A bicephalic rule also appears in the Second Temple period in the Testament of Simeon 7.12, Test. of Dan 5.4, and Test. of Naphtali 8.2-3.⁴¹⁷ During this time, a more radical attribution of royalty to the priesthood arises in texts that give precedence to the lineage of Levi over that of Judah. An example of this is the Testament of Reuben 6.10-12:

Draw near to Levi in humility of your hearts in order that you may receive a blessing from his mouth. For he will bless Israel and Judah since it is through him that the Lord has chosen to reign in the presence of all people. Prostrate yourself before his posterity, because (his offspring) will die in your behalf in wars visible and invisible. And he shall be among you an eternal King.

Our redemptive nexus of deification, suffering and beneficence is clearly visible in this text. The lineage of Levi here holds the royal distinction both explicitly and implicitly. Explicitly, the high priest rules as "an eternal king," but, implicitly, he now plays the

⁴¹⁵ William Schniedewind, "King and Priest in the Book of Chronicles and the Duality of Qumran Messianism," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 94 (1994): 72-73.

⁴¹⁶ Cf. Walter Brueggemann, *A Commentary on Jeremiah: Exile and Homecoming* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1998), 319-320.

⁴¹⁷ For a discussion of these texts, see A. J. B. Higgins, "Priest and Messiah," *Vetus Testamentum* 3 (1953): 328ff.

royal function of defender and warrior, which is typically a kingly duty.⁴¹⁸ Undoubtedly, the author of the text supposes that the sacral function of the king now belongs to the high priest. Thus, he holds the deified privilege of being the one in whom “the Lord has chosen to reign.” Suffering and beneficence are also present in this text because the priestly offspring suffer and “will die in your behalf in wars visible and invisible.”

Another supposed example of the preemption of royal prerogatives occurs in the Zadokite Work. A. J. B. Higgins suggests that the “Messiah from Aaron and Israel” in the document is likely a rejection of Davidic Messianism because the community considered itself the true Israel.⁴¹⁹ Other scholars would interpret the phrase as “the anointed of Aaron and Israel,” which is easily understood as two figures and subsequently not a complete preemption of royal prerogative.⁴²⁰

At this point, we should also mention the Teacher of Righteousness in the Qumran literature. The scanty nature of the texts about this figure and his community is great fodder for scholarly debate about his identity, circumstances and historical setting. William Brownlee rightly admits, “Experience with the multifarious theories as to the real history involved should teach us that there is no quick and easy solution to all the problems of historical interpretation.”⁴²¹ We shall not venture into the hotly contested

⁴¹⁸ John M. Scholer notices this military function of the priests and attributes it to the Hasmonean dynasty in Proleptic Priests: Priesthood in the Epistle to the Hebrews (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the New Testament Supplemental Series 49, 1991), 27-31. Certainly, the activities of Simon take on royal proportions (Cf. I Macc. 14:4-5 and 41-49).

⁴¹⁹ Higgins, 332.

⁴²⁰ Cf. Shemaryahu Talmon, “Waiting for the Messiah at Qumran,” Judaism and Their Messiahs at the Turn of the Christian Era, ed. Jacob Neusner, William Green and Ernest Frerichs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988), 122.

⁴²¹ William Brownlee, “The wicked Priest, the Man of Lies and the Righteous Teacher: The Problem of Identity,” Jewish Quarterly Review 73, no. 1 (1982): 1-2.

historical situation of this figure. Our purpose is simply to explore the fact that he fits the nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence that we are considering in this study.

Concerning what we are calling deification, the Teacher of Righteousness holds special status for the community at Qumran. They considered him the authoritative interpreter of biblical tradition because God revealed truth to him in ways that go beyond the scriptural authors themselves. He is “the priest into [whose heart] God put [understand]ing to interpret all the words of his servants the prophets” (1QpHab 2.8-9), and the one “to whom God made known all the mysteries of the words of his servants the prophets” (1QpHab 7.4-5).⁴²² The Teacher’s ultimate ability in relation to his community is “to guide them in the way of his (God’s) heart” (CD 1.11). Thus, the Dead Sea Documents uniquely portray the teacher as interpreter extraordinaire. He holds a special status as revealer of God. Recent scholarship suggests that the community at Qumran employed angelomorphic anthropology.⁴²³ We shall return to this angelomorphic theology as we discuss the teacher’s communal beneficence, but the association with the teacher of angelomorphic language suggests the extent of the deification associated with him. April De Conick attributes the language of 4Q491.11 to the teacher.⁴²⁴ The language of the text repeatedly describes one who possesses a seat within the divine council:

... He established his truth of old, and the secrets of his devising in al[...
hea]ven and the counsel of the humble as an eternal council [...] forever a
mighty throne in the divine council. None of the Kedemite kings shall sit
in it, nor shall their nobles [...] shall not resemble my glory, and none

⁴²² Cited from Hanan Eshel, The Dead Sea Scrolls and the Hasmonean State (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 176.

⁴²³ Cf. Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, All the Glory of Adam: Liturgical Anthropology in the Dead Sea Scrolls (Leiden: Brill, 2002), 158-159.

⁴²⁴ April D. De Conick, Paradise Now: Essays on Early Jewish and Christian Mysticism (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2006), 75.

shall be exalted save me, nor approach me, for I have taken my seat in [the council] of heaven and none [...] I shall be reckoned with angels, and my station in the council of the Holy Ones. I do not desire like mortals; everything precious to me is in the glory [...] in the holy dwelling. Who has been denigrated on my account, yet who can resemble my glory? Who [...] bear[s all s]ufferings like me and who [end]ures evil – did it resemble mine? I have been taught, and there is no teaching that is like [my teaching]. Who can stop me when I op[en my mouth,] and the flow of my speech – who can measure it? Who can arraign me or compare to my justice? [...]Fo]r I am rec[koned] with angels, [and my g]lory with the sons of the King. Not [with] gold or precious gold of Ophir.⁴²⁵

The text suggests that a type of deification is present in Qumran that includes kingship language. However, other scholars contest the attribution of this text to the Teacher of Righteousness. Whether or not this text refers to the teacher, the speaker's deification is associated with having suffered and endured evil. Suffering does play a prominent role in texts about the Teacher of Righteousness because of his adversary who deposes and opposes the Teacher. Texts describe the nemesis as the "Wicked Priest:"

"Woe to the one who gets his friend drunk, pouring out his anger, making him drink, just to get a look at their holy days." This refers to the Wicked Priest, who pursued the Teacher of Righteousness to destroy him in the heat of his anger at the place of exile. At the time set aside for the repose of the Day of Atonement he appeared to them to destroy them and to bring them to ruin on the fast day, the Sabbath intended for repose.(1QpHab 11.2-8).

⁴²⁵ De Conick, 74.

One should keep in mind that the type of *peshar* or interpretation that developed at Qumran arose as a way to apply the scripture to the life of the community in light of their situation and persecution. The beneficence to the community arising from the Teacher of Righteousness includes the community's enlightened interpretation, a genuine observation of torah, and a sense of election in association with the Teacher in contradistinction to the wicked and their destiny:

This concerns all those who observe the law in the house of Judah, whom God will deliver from the house of judgment because of their suffering and because of their faith in the Teacher of Righteousness. (1QpHab 8.1-3)

As I already alluded, the angelomorphic anthropology plays a role in the community's perceived benefits arising from the teacher's instruction. Joseph Fitzmyer outlines several texts that show the sequence of beneficiary communication within Qumran. He says, "Thus the Teacher of Righteousness would consider his own countenance illumined by the light coming from God and understand his own countenance, in turn, as illumining the Many."⁴²⁶ This trajectory of communication from the divine realm to the community allows Crispin Fletcher-Louis to describe the community as "truly angelomorphic."⁴²⁷ In another place, Fletcher-Louis says, "If the Qumran community thinks of itself as the true Israel and true Adam, which is created to bear God's Glory, it is not surprising that they should believe that, at times, their own identity is angelic."⁴²⁸ As we have already mentioned, the community understands itself as the true Israel because of its association

⁴²⁶ Joseph A Fitzmyer, According to Paul: Studies in the Theology of the Apostles (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1993), 77.

⁴²⁷ Fletcher-Louis, All The Glory of Adam, 12.

⁴²⁸ Crispin H. T. Fletcher-Louis, "Some Reflections on Angelomorphic Humanity Texts," Dead Sea Discoveries 7, no. 3 (2000): 297.

with the Teacher of Righteousness. Thus, the literature arising from Qumran suggests that the community held to a type of angelomorphic deification due to its sectarian situation that arose through persecution. The community understood its suffering and identification with the teacher as a benefit that makes them the true Israel. We can see a type of democratization in the deification process at Qumran. Here we find, not only the teacher as a deified individual, but this uniqueness transfers to the community as it identifies with him and assumes his angelomorphic qualities. We must now trace a few instances where a similar democratization of sacrality takes place within Judaism.

Many texts in the Hebrew bible reflect a democratization of sacrality beyond the attribution of royal privilege to priests. This phenomenon of democratizing privilege grew in the time of the exile. For our purposes, we will briefly explore four compositions that show this type of democratization: the Priestly source of the Pentateuch, the Holiness School of the Pentateuch, Second Isaiah's Suffering Servant and the book of Job. Other examples exist, but these will show the democratization of sacrality beyond kingship and priesthood.

While we have already alluded to the deification that exists in the first account of creation, we must now recognize that scholars usually date the Priestly (P) creation story to the time of the exile. With the collapse of the monarchy and the destruction of the temple, the Priestly Torah begins a process of re-visioning sacrality in ever-wider circles beyond the cult and monarchy. We briefly want to explore this re-visioning process within the Torah because it sets the stage for developments within subsequent Judaism. Scholars have noted several democratizing shifts within the Torah.

The first shift occurs in Genesis 1 where all humanity assumes the royal privilege of representing God as the divine image. Eckart Otto describes the significance of the text as an exilic reaction to Mesopotamian royal ideology:

In Mesopotamian royal ideology, the motif of humanity made in the image of God (*soeloem*) was reserved for the king as god's representative (*salum*); in the Israelite version, the priesthood opposed the negative anthropology in Mesopotamian ideology, which bound humankind to the state legitimated god, by applying the motif to every individual and democratizing the royal ideology.⁴²⁹

I would suggest that the Priestly Torah at this point is not simply reacting to Mesopotamian royal ideology. The Priestly association of the image of God with all humanity works to collapse Israel's royal myth that societal wellbeing and cosmic order are dependent on the health and success of the king. In this regard, Israel's mythology is similar to Mesopotamian royal ideology. In Psalm 72, the reign of the righteous king brings prosperity and fertility to the land (vv. 3, 6-7, 16-17), and, in courtly hyperbole, he reigns "from sea to sea and from the river to the ends of the earth" (v. 3). In contrast to such royal ideology, the Priestly creation story imbues all humanity with the divine image (Gen 1:26-27) and gives to humankind the tasks to "be fruitful and increase" and "rule over the fish of the sea and all the birds of the air and all the creatures that move upon the ground" (Gen 1:28).⁴³⁰ Thus, a democratization of the Israelite royal myth occurs in the Priestly account of creation when it applies royal privilege to all humanity. Humankind inclusively represents the divine, and the beneficence of the cosmic order is now the

⁴²⁹ Eckart Otto, "Law and Ethics," Religion in the Ancient World: A Guide, ed. Sarah Iles Johnston (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2004), 88.

⁴³⁰ Cf. Mark G. Brett, Genesis: Procreation and the Politics of Identity (New York: Routledge, 2000), 28.

work of every individual, not just the work of a single Israelite or Babylonian monarch. Suffering is not readily visible in the text, but perceptive interpreters recognize that behind the Priestly creation story is the plight of the exiles. Donald Gowan connects the exilic significance to the Priestly creation account:

Anything P had to say about creation was addressed to a downtrodden people who had lost everything, victims of their own sins and the sins of others, at the mercy of the powers of this world. If this describes the initial readers of P's Creation account, then this passage must be seen as a bold challenge to them to believe something that was not visible in the world around them and in no way confirmed by their recent experiences. The creation message asserts that the whole world belongs to God, that it is good, and that he is in charge. It concludes with the assurance that they are worth something, after all, despite having lost everything. And the commission given to humanity, to subdue the earth, speaks of the essential conditions for life to continue and to be more than a miserable existence for those exiles.⁴³¹

Thus, the Priestly creation account functions as a message of hope for the suffering exiles by announcing that the beneficence of the world is ultimately in their hands as the divine representatives. These exiles do not have to wait for the arrival of a new king to bring order to the cosmos; they are themselves the divine agents. Just as God brings order out of chaos (*tohû-bohû*) in Genesis 1:2, humans are God's agents for creative change against the ongoing chaos of the cosmos.

⁴³¹ Donald E. Gowan, From Eden to Babel: A Commentary on the Book of Genesis 1-11 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1988), 16.

Another democratizing shift that scholars recognize occurs in material associated with the Holiness School, which is an expansion of the Priestly Torah.⁴³² A growing number of scholars, including Israel Knohl and Jacob Milgrom, believe that the Holiness School was responsible for the editing of the Torah “at the time of the exile and the return.”⁴³³ The primary material of the Holiness School is the Holiness Code (Leviticus 17-26), but Knohl argues that the Holiness School’s “recensional activities” are evident throughout Exodus-Numbers and in Genesis 17:7-8 and Deuteronomy 32:48-52.⁴³⁴ What is the difference between the Priestly Torah and the Holiness School? Knohl argues that the Priestly Torah reflects a bifurcation of religious faith “between the popular experience of faith, which PT considers preliminary, and the Priestly faith experience, which it considers the higher level of faith.”⁴³⁵ The Holiness School opposed this bifurcation:

Although HS assigns “cultic holiness” exclusively to the priests, holiness is no longer limited to the narrow confines of the Temple and the priesthood but emerges from the Priestly center, radiating out to all sectors of society and to all walks of life and encompassing the entire land. Israelites are called to realize the challenge of the holy life in their eating and drinking, in their relations to their families and to the stranger dwelling in the land, in their work in the fields and commerce, on the seat of judgment and in the company of friends.⁴³⁶

⁴³² On the idea of the Holiness Code as an expansion of the Priestly Torah, see Frederick E. Greenspahn, The Hebrew Bible: New Insights and Scholarship (New York: New York University Press, 2007), 123.

⁴³³ Israel Knohl, The Divine Symphony: The Bible’s Many Voices (Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 2003), 163-164, note 16.

⁴³⁴ Israel Knohl, The Sanctuary of Silence: The Priestly Torah and the Holiness School (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), 101-103.

⁴³⁵ Knohl, Sanctuary of Silence, 197.

⁴³⁶ Knohl, Sanctuary of Silence, 198.

In other words, the Holiness School sacralizes the life of every Israelite. “The Holiness School wants to influence the people as a whole, to create an integration of the priesthood and the nation, and for this purpose it calls upon the entire nation to lead a life of holiness. According to the Holiness School, all the people of Israel are priests of sorts.”⁴³⁷

Before discussing how this relates to our triad of deification, suffering and beneficence, we should give a few examples of the democratization of sacrality arising from the Holiness School. The first and foremost example of democratization occurs in the Holiness School’s fundamental shift in understanding holiness: “You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy” (Lev. 19:2). Holiness is here located among the people in their ritual and ethical conduct. In contrast, the Priestly writings locate holiness “only with regard to ritual matters: the holy Temple, the holy days, the priests as holy people.”⁴³⁸ A second democratization is the practice of *tzitzit*, the wearing of a blue cord attached to garments, which Knohl understands as an innovation of the Holiness School in Numbers 15:38. He compares this common practice with the dress of the high priest and concludes that *tzitzit* is a way that “one can attain a level of holiness akin to that of the high priest.”⁴³⁹

We must now explore how the Holiness School’s democratization of sacrality fits our triad of suffering, deification and beneficence. Deification is evident in the very idea that the people are to be holy because God is holy. The democratized sacrality of the Holiness School shifts the Priestly Torah’s emphasis on cultic sacrality to the larger arena

⁴³⁷ Knohl, *Divine Symphony*, 68.

⁴³⁸ Knohl, *Divine Symphony*, 63.

⁴³⁹ Knohl, *Divine Symphony*, 68.

of the people. God is to be present in the people, not just the temple. Accompanying this shift in sacrality, the Holiness Code (Lev. 17-26) emphasizes social justice for the poor, the alien, the neighbor, the laborer, the deaf, and the blind. Thus, the democratized sacrality of the Holiness School is to benefit “the disadvantaged person on the margins of society, someone a community may be tempted to ignore for economic, political, or physical reasons.”⁴⁴⁰ Why does the Holiness Code place such an emphasis on societal beneficence? I would argue that the answer lies in the motivational clauses associated with some of the code’s commands:

When an alien lives with you in your land, do not mistreat him. The alien living with you must be treated as one of your native-born. Love him as yourself, for you were aliens in Egypt. I am the LORD your God. (Lev. 19:33-32)

Do not use dishonest standards when measuring length, weight or quantity. Use honest scales and honest weights, an honest ephah and an honest hin. I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of Egypt. (Lev. 19:35-36)

Thus, we find the reason for the code placing a premium on social justice and societal beneficence rests in “the people’s memory of their suffering.”⁴⁴¹ The appeal that the Holiness Code makes to the people’s experience in Egypt roots their ethical concern for others in the experience of suffering. However, we must recognize that the newer tendency to date the activities of the Holiness School to the period of the exile and return suggests that the paraenesis using Israel’s experience in Egypt presents the concerns of

⁴⁴⁰ Samuel Eugene Balentine, The Torah’s Vision of Worship (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1999), 171.

⁴⁴¹ Jeffrey Wattles, The Golden Rule (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996), 46.

the latter community. Thus, behind the suffering of the Israelites in Egypt, we can detect the more recent concerns of the exilic and postexilic communities.

Another exilic democratizing of sacrality occurs in the controversial and problematic text of Second Isaiah's servant songs. We have already mentioned how the Targum of Isaiah interprets Isaiah 52-53 as a messianic prophecy. The messiah in the Targum is victorious, and suffering does not fall upon him but falls upon the gentiles and the wicked. Thus, the Targum of Isaiah employs traditional monarchial theology where the messiah's beneficence upon the people depends on his success and victory. However, scholars insist that this interpretation has very little to do with the actual theology of Second Isaiah. Far from a monarchial restoration, Second Isaiah democratizes the covenant with David and extends it to Israel (Isa. 55:3).⁴⁴² So what are we to make of the suffering servant of Second Isaiah? Modern interpreters seem to be coming to a consensus that the servant of Second Isaiah should not be limited "to one individual, one class, or, for that matter, one time."⁴⁴³ Hans-Jürgen Hermisson takes a similar perspective:

The interpretation advocated here is nevertheless not simply "individual" or even "autobiographical." It seeks to do justice to the collective and supra-individual traits in the Servant Songs . . . The special feature of these texts – their floating, metaphorical, tradition-based expressions – allows no biographical interpretation in detail. The whole tradition of the prophetic office, the experience of many prophets, has flowed into the

⁴⁴² Cf. Donald E. Gowan, Theology of the Prophetic Books: The Death & Resurrection of Israel (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 173.

⁴⁴³ Paul D. Hanson, Isaiah 40-66: Interpretation, a Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1995), 41.

presentation of this office . . . they are not finished with their reference to that concrete prophet; their truth is not thereby exhausted.⁴⁴⁴

Examining the ambiguity of Isaiah 53, David J. A. Clines insists that “unequivocal identifications are not made and that the poem in this respect also is open-ended and allows for multiple interpretations.”⁴⁴⁵ The historical variety of uses of the poem supports such an ambiguous interpretation. Christians have used the poem to understand the Christ event, but numerous other applications arise in the history of interpretation:

The self-involving nature of the biblical text, however, is not a new phenomenon as countless generations of readers have recognized this dynamic dimension in one way or another. This is especially true with the servant passages. For instance, language from these texts, particularly the fourth, is found in Dan 11 and 12 along with Zech 9-13. There are also parallels between the righteous sufferers in Wisdom of Solomon 2:10-5:23 and the servant in Isa 52:13-53:12. These texts display that people readily identified themselves with/or as the Suffering Servant. The final servant passage has also played an important role within the Jewish community beyond that which is located in the Hebrew Bible. Throughout the centuries the Jewish people identified with the servant in this text. Specifically, in the context of the atrocities of the Christian crusades and the unspeakable sufferings of the holocaust, the Jewish people naturally identified themselves with the Suffering Servant and thus have found solace and meaning in and for their sufferings.⁴⁴⁶

⁴⁴⁴ Hans-Jürgen Hermisson, “The Fourth Servant Song in the Context of Second Isaiah,” *The Suffering Servant: Isaiah 53 in Jewish and Christian Sources*, ed. Bernd Janowski and Peter Stuhlmacher (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 46.

⁴⁴⁵ David J. A. Clines, *I, He, We, & They: A Literary Approach to Isaiah 53* (Sheffield: Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series, 1976), 33.

⁴⁴⁶ Jim W. Adams, *The Performative Nature and Function of Isaiah 40-55* (New York: T & T Clark, 2006), 214.

While agreeing with the scholarly tendency to leave the identity of the Servant of Second Isaiah vague, I want to explore how this vague character adds a new dimension to our triad of suffering, beneficence and deification. In order to accomplish this, we must appreciate the courtly nature of the text. Undoubtedly, scholars who want to locate the tradition of Isaiah 52-53 in royal ideology are not far off the mark. However, before locating the tradition of Isaiah 53 in substitute king rituals of Mesopotamia,⁴⁴⁷ I think that a more legitimate tradition exists in the royal-courtly tradition of the Hebrew bible.

We find scattered throughout the Hebrew scripture a type of court tale that involves a falsely accused suffering figure who is condemned to death but finds ultimate vindication and exaltation. George Nickelsburg describes the basic tale:

The protagonist is a wise man in a royal court. Maliciously accused of violating the law of the land, he is condemned to death. But he is rescued at the brink of death, vindicated of charges against him, and exalted to a high position (sometimes vizier, sometimes judge or executioner of his enemies), while his enemies are punished.⁴⁴⁸

Court tales of this type appear in ancient and modern texts from the Near East. The Story of Ahiqar, which recounts the vindication of Ahiqar from the wiles of his nefarious nephew, Nadin, appears as early as the Fifth Century BCE in the Aramaic text from Elephantine and as late as the Arabic of the Arabian Nights.⁴⁴⁹ John Dominic Crossan

⁴⁴⁷ John H. Walton, "The Imagery of the Substitute King Ritual in Isaiah's Fourth Servant Song," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 122 (2003): 734-743.

⁴⁴⁸ George W. E. Nickelsburg, *Resurrection, Immortality, and Eternal Life in Intertestamental Judaism* (Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1972), 170.

⁴⁴⁹ Cf. Jonas C. Greenfield, "The Wisdom of Ahiqar," *Wisdom in Ancient Israel: Essays in Honour of J. A. Emerton*, ed. John Day, Robert P. Gordon and H. G. M. Williamson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 43-52; Stephanie Dalley, *Esther's*

suggests that Jewish writers adapted the court-tale motif into two variations. “The key distinction is whether vindication happens in the *present* or in the *future, before or after* death.”⁴⁵⁰ The traditional story of vindication before death occurs in seven stories including Joseph (Genesis 39-41), Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego (Daniel 3), Daniel (Daniel 6), all the Jewish people (Esther 3), Susanna (Susanna), Tobit (Tobit 1), and the Jewish people of Alexandria (3 Maccabees 3). Collins argues that three texts show a new use of the vindication motif. The Suffering Servant (Isaiah 52-53), the mother with seven sons (2 Maccabees 7), and the just who are unjustly persecuted (Wisdom 2-5) are texts that promise vindication and exaltation after death. Collins wryly says, “It is probably fair to conclude that *before-death* vindication is older and more pervasive than *after-death* vindication.”⁴⁵¹ However, the regular Jewish experience of suffering persecution and pogroms during the Second Temple period necessitated a reworking of the traditional court tale. Experience could not sustain the belief that God always vindicates the just when persecuted unjustly. I would argue that Isaiah’s suffering servant is a reworking of the court motif for exilic Judaism to remind them that sometimes vindication comes not in this life but that vindication and exaltation yet come. While suffering and death often give rise to speculation of divine abandonment and ultimate failure, the suffering servant text is a reassurance that the righteous, despite appearances, make an impact upon society with repercussions that far supersede apparent failure.

Revenge at Susa: From Sennacherib to Ahasuerus (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 216.

⁴⁵⁰ John Dominic Crossan, The Birth of Christianity: Discovering What Happened in the Years Immediately After the Execution of Jesus (New York: Harper Collins, 1998), 499-500.

⁴⁵¹ Crossan, Birth of Christianity, 500.

We are now in a position to appreciate how Deutero-Isaiah's suffering servant contributes to our understanding of suffering, beneficence and deification. Isaiah 52:13-53:12 gives, of course, a significant and profound portrait of suffering. We find levels of suffering in the text far surpassing any other text of the Hebrew bible. The poem describes the servant's suffering in both physical and social terms. Physically, the servant is "marred" (52:14), "wounded" (53:5), "bruised" (53:5), and "cut off from the land of the living" (53:8). Socially, he is "despised" (53:3), "rejected" (53:3), "not esteemed" (53:3), and "oppressed" (53:7). However, more startling than the servant's physical and social suffering, the poem suggests that all of this is Yahweh's doing and pleasure (53:10). If we are not to read this announcement as a form of divine sadism, we must appreciate the possibility that the servant's suffering is reflective of divine suffering. Scholars, Jewish and Christian, instinctively move to include God in the suffering of the servant in order to make sense of the text and to prevent it from being divinely sadistic. This interpretive move is visible in theologians who themselves have wrestled with human suffering such as Abraham Heschel in the shadow of the Holocaust and Kazoh Kitamori in the shadow of Hiroshima. Heschel identifies the suffering servant of Second Isaiah as Israel and insists, "Israel's suffering is God's grief."⁴⁵²

Suffering as chastisement is man's own responsibility; suffering as redemption is God's responsibility. It was He Who had chosen Israel as His servant; it was He Who had placed upon Israel the task of suffering for others. The meaning of her agony was shifted from the sphere of man to the sphere of God, from the moment to eternity.⁴⁵³

⁴⁵² Heschel, The Prophets, 151.

⁴⁵³ Heschel, The Prophets, 151.

To make sense of human suffering, Heschel finds that it is necessary to include God in the suffering of the people. Kitamori similarly does the same thing when he considers the suffering servant. He illusively identifies the servant, following Delitzsch, as a pyramid “with the base as the whole nation of Israel, the sides consisting of a few devout Israelites, and the apex formed by one individual.”⁴⁵⁴ The significance of the servant’s suffering is that it is a symbolization of the pain of God:

The word “symbol” is derived from the Greek *symbolon*, the cognate noun of the verb *symbollein*, “to unite.” A symbol witnesses to divine truth by uniting human and divine truth. Man’s pain becomes a symbol of the pain of God because God and man are united through the condition of pain.⁴⁵⁵

Israel’s ability to survive the crisis of the Exile, according to Kitamori, rests in Israel’s ability to unite its pain to God. This act of symbolization becomes redemptive:

The truth of pain as redemptive suffering is the highest and holiest reality of all. The attitude of the human race toward pain determines its rate of progress. While scores of nations died out, Israel alone maintained its imperishable significance because of its distinct understanding of the truth of pain.⁴⁵⁶

I believe that this instinctive theological shifting of human pain to divine pain by such diverse theologians as Heschel and Kitamori goes a long way in understanding why early Christianity read this poem as a prophecy of Christ. A form of sacrality exists within the language of the poem. For instance, when Isaiah 52:14 (“He will be high and lifted up”)

⁴⁵⁴ Kazoh Kitamori, Theology of the Pain of God (Richmond: John Knox Press, 1965, Fifth Edition), 65.

⁴⁵⁵ Kitamori, Theology of the Pain of God, 61.

⁴⁵⁶ Kitamori, Theology of the Pain of God, 69.

announces the divine intent to exalt the servant, we hear echoes of First-Isaiah's divine vision ("I saw the Lord . . . high and lifted up"). Thus, the poem begins by assuring the reader that the servant's sufferings, contrary to the old royal ideology, are not indicative of divine disfavor. Suffering is not a harbinger of divine disapproval and social calamity, as in the sacral kingship ideology of the monarchial period. The servant's suffering is a harbinger of God's work of redemption. Deutero-Isaiah democratizes sacrality and removes its insistence that suffering spells divine displeasure. The suffering servant "will be high and lifted up" precisely for suffering. "The Servant here is actually described in terms of divinity. The phrases *shall be exalted* and *lifted up* are representative expressions from earlier literature, such as Isaiah and the Psalms, used normally of God."⁴⁵⁷ In Deutero-Isaiah's reworking of courtly theology, he shows that the righteous may not find earthly vindication, but their righteous suffering, far from being a sign of divine disapproval, is participation in divine work. Thus, Deutero-Isaiah garbs the servant with divine sacrality. In his suffering, the social beneficence achieved through the servant is for the many. Charles Scobie emphasizes the universal scope of the servant's beneficiary suffering:

The benefits of the servant's suffering and death extend to the "many" (*rabbim*): *many* are astonished at what he does (52:14); he bears the sin of the *many* (53:12) and makes *many* righteous (53:11). What is meant by "many" is indicated in 52:15, which speaks of the effect of the servant's mission on "many nations." In keeping with the broader context of 2

⁴⁵⁷ George A. F. Knight, Servant Theology: A Commentary on the Book of Isaiah 40-55 (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1984), 166.

Isaiah, the servant's mission is directed not just to Israel (49:5-6) but to all nations (42:1, 4; 49:6).⁴⁵⁸

Thus, we can see elements of our redemptive nexus in the suffering servant. In a recasting of courtly vindication after death, not before death, the servant suffers, reflects deification and benefits others. Second Isaiah, thus, moves beyond the royal ideology of the avoidance of suffering to show that God sometimes works through suffering, which does not indicate divine disfavor. We can also see that in Second Isaiah, the early Hebrew idea of the embedding of the individual within kin, clan and confederacy is enlarging to include a universal understanding of embeddedness. For Second Isaiah, servant affects more than kin, clan or confederacy; the servant affects the nations.

The book of Job also recasts the older sacral kingship theology via a court tale to show the shortcomings of the royal avoidance of pain. For our purposes, we shall examine Job's royal status, recast the story along the lines of the court tale, and finally examine the significance that this reading of Job makes for our understanding of suffering, deification and beneficence in relation to our exploration of the Hebrew scripture.

Several scholars have drawn attention to Job's royal traits including Caquot,⁴⁵⁹ Lasine,⁴⁶⁰ and Gowan.⁴⁶¹ While Job is not given royal titular status in the text, the

⁴⁵⁸ Charles Scobie, The Ways of Our God: An Approach to Biblical Theology (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 407.

⁴⁵⁹ A. Caquot, "Traits royaux dans le personnage de Job," *Maqqél shâqédh: La branche d'amandier: Hommage à Wilhelm Vischer* (Montpellier: Causse, Graille & Castelnaud, 1960), 32-45.

⁴⁶⁰ Stuart Lasine, Knowing Kings: Knowledge, Power, and Narcissism in the Hebrew Bible (Atlanta: Society of Biblical Literature, 2001), 178.

characterization of Job in the narrative prologue, the saturation of royal language in Job's speech in chapter 29, and the comparisons of Job to kings and princes in 3:13-15, 21:28 and 31:37 suggest that the work should be read with royal significance. We will briefly consider the prologue and Job's speech.

In the prologue, the narrator and God characterize Job in ways that suggest royal status. The narrator describes the vastness of Job's wealth and concludes that he is "the greatest of all the men of the east" (Job 1:3). The text is reminiscent of 1 Kings 4:26-30 that describes the vastness of Solomon's reign and describes Solomon's wisdom as "greater than all the wisdom of the sons of the east" (1 Kings 4:30 [5:10]). To further support the royal status of Job, the narrative prologue has God characterizing Job by stating: "there is no one like him on the earth" (1:8 and 2:3). According to F. Rachel Magdalene, "This is a rare accolade" used for King Saul (1 Sam. 10:24) and King Hezekiah (2 Kings 18:5).⁴⁶² Thus, the narrative prologue, while not giving to Job an actual royal title, makes clear Job's regal similitude for a reader versed in the Hebrew scripture.

The royal portrayal of Job continues in Job's final speech, the oath of innocence, in chapters 29-31. In 29:2-25, the royal imagery is the fullest. Leo Perdue divides the text into four strophes (vv. 2-6, vv. 7-13, vv. 14-20 and vv. 21-25) that individually highlight aspects of Job's royal status.⁴⁶³ The first strophe emphasizes the royal tradition of God's providential guidance and blessing in Job's life before his calamity. In the

⁴⁶¹ Donald E. Gowan, "Reading Job as a Wisdom Script," Journal for the Study of the Old Testament 55 (1992): 90.

⁴⁶² F. Rachel Magdalene, On the Scales of Righteousness: Neo-Babylonian Trial Law and the Book of Job (Providence: Brown Judaic Studies, 2007), 99.

⁴⁶³ Leo Perdue, Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 189-190.

second strophe, we find a description of Job's acclaim and recognition as a royal judge. Perdue says, "The imagery reconstructs that of the wise king, particularly Solomon, whose famous wisdom at court brought 'awe' to those who observed him in judgment (1 Kgs 3.28)."⁴⁶⁴ Strophe III describes Job's regal attire in terms of the social beneficence that a just and righteous king establishes. Job proclaims, "I wore righteousness, and it clothed me, my justice was a robe and crown" (v. 14). The beneficiaries of Job's justice and righteousness are the blind, lame, and needy (vv. 15-16), disadvantaged people who most need the protection of a wise ruler. In the fourth strophe, the poem describes Job's regal guidance and direction for his people. The imagery of this strophe reflects the sacral nature of kingship. Perdue thinks the section borders on self-idolatry:

People would come and sit in the 'light of Job's countenance,' an image used of the blessing of divine favor. Indeed the language of this chapter borders on self-idolatry as Job describes himself in terms rarely used of kings and often reserved for God.⁴⁶⁵

However, sacral kingship ideology in the Hebrew scripture regularly imbues the king with the language of divinity. The text does not border on self-idolatry because the language is simply reflecting the sacrality of Job's kingly status. We can see in this text that Job's regal status reflects what we have already explored in terms of sacral kingship. He holds a deified status, and his just and righteous reign results in societal beneficence, which is a sign of divine blessing.

We must now consider how the book of Job employs the court tale. In its final form, the book of Job follows the traditional pattern of the vindication of the one accused.

⁴⁶⁴ Perdue, Wisdom in Revolt, 191.

⁴⁶⁵ Perdue, Wisdom in Revolt, 191.

The narrative structure of the book concludes with God blessing Job, restoring his wealth, and endowing him with new sons and daughters. However, the book is subversive in several ways regarding the vindication pattern. First, we find the story of Job to be subversive in its portrayal of the protagonist. If we accept Job's kingly status, the story departs from the usual model by portraying the accused as a king. In traditional vindication stories, the king threatens the protagonist, but the story of Job recasts the story, and the king is under threat. Recasting a vindication story in this way raises the old problem of separating royalty from disaster to maintain social order. However, Job's friends, far from trying to separate him from disaster, act as accusers who are sure of his guilt. Is it possible that the recasting of a vindication story along these new lines is attempting to show the folly in the belief that the king's calamity is necessarily a sign of divine disfavor? Both the narrator and God insist upon Job's righteous character. While his world comes to ruin, and his friends suspect that Job is morally complicit in the catastrophe, the readers of the tale know that the suffering of this regal individual is not due to any divine displeasure. God in the prologue is happy with his servant, Job. Thus, the composition's use of royal imagery for Job, in light of his troubles, casts doubt on the old royal ideology that royal suffering indicates divine displeasure and impending social calamity. For the exilic community, the story of Job suggests that suffering and hardships are not reducible to a formula of divine disfavor on account of moral guilt. Suffering is much more arbitrary than the old royal ideology suggests. The righteous do suffer; in the face of suffering, the righteous must, like Job, challenge God for vindication. Several scholars see the significance of combining royal status with suffering in the book of Job as offering a new anthropological understanding. Janzen

says that the book of Job shows that a “self-understanding as ‘dust and ashes,’ with all the suffering to which it is vulnerable, is not incompatible with royal status but now may be accepted as the very condition under which royalty manifests itself.”⁴⁶⁶ Samuel Balentine makes a similar anthropological claim in light of the book of Job:

Like Behemoth and Leviathan, God endows human beings with power and responsibility for their domains. They are and must be fierce, unbridled contenders for justice, sometimes with God and sometimes against God. As near equals of God their destiny is to live at the dangerous intersection between the merely human and the supremely divine.⁴⁶⁷

The story of Job ultimately situates humanity between dust and sacral royalty. Janzen questioningly asserts that such a position calls forth determination:

What does it mean to affirm at one and the same time that to be human is to be dust and the royal image? . . . Does not dust itself, without ceasing to be royalty, begin to become aware of the conditions under which and the modes in which its royal power is to be exercised?⁴⁶⁸

As a composition, the story of Job celebrates a patriarchal figure whose relation to Judaism is doubtful, but the story portrays this individual with regal status amid suffering. While the composition of Job likely spanned several centuries with the narrative arising around the monarchy, the dialogues during the exile, and some of the

⁴⁶⁶ J. Gerald Janzen, *Job, Interpretation: A Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta: Westminster John Knox, 1985), 257.

⁴⁶⁷ Samuel E. Balentine, “What Are Human Beings, That You Make So Much of Them?” *God in the Fray: A Tribute to Walter Brueggemann*, ed. Tod Linafelt and Timothy Beal (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1998), 277.

⁴⁶⁸ Janzen, 13.

material (Elihu's speeches and Ch. 28) arising after the exile,⁴⁶⁹ the composition suggests that humanity's royal status as God's sacral representative gives no exemption from suffering.

In our exploration of sacral kingship, early Hebrew corporality and the democratization of sacrality in Judaism, we have seen portrayals of individuals who possess divine status, suffer and benefit society. The texts that we have explored show repeated instances of divinely characterized individuals who suffer and who benefit others. Lineages survive through crippled and blind descendants of sacral status. A family is born through the laming struggle of its ancestor with deity. The family and a foreign nation benefit from the suffering of a betrayed brother whose rise to fame assures food in famine. A deliverer arises who amid suffering represents God and leads his people out of captivity. Prophets become indistinguishable in their suffering from the Divine pathos that they represent while yet identifying with their societies. A fledging remnant of a nation reflects God's holiness by embracing the memory of their suffering to care for foreigners, widows, and orphans. The nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence runs throughout the Hebrew bible in serendipitous splendor. When I consider these instances of deification, suffering and beneficence, I wonder why James Hinton's concrete illustrations of the redemptive nexus are so meager. The best he offers are his stories of peas, shoes and motherhood. However, none of Hinton's illustrations actually deals with illness, sickness or disability. I find this surprising for a medical practitioner who is writing to encourage the sick. While we have examined suffering of all sorts in the Hebrew bible, Jacob's limp, Moses' speech, Mephibosheth's lameness and

⁴⁶⁹ Cf. Leo G. Perdue, Wisdom in Revolt: Metaphorical Theology in the Book of Job (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1991), 76.

Job's illness are instances where the suffering relates to sickness or disability. Hinton's theological nexus is suggestive of how the experience of sickness is transformative. However, the argument lacks concrete instances to show how sick individuals can reflect deity and benefit society. As I have thought about this weakness in Hinton's argument, I have been intrigued by a stream of thought available to Hinton from his own medical practice and research that could have served as a way to solidly illustrate his theological nexus. We will briefly consider Hinton's selection of aural surgery as a specialty and his subsequent research and discoveries in the field to illustrate Hinton's theological position and to suggest an overlooked area for theological consideration, medical research. Hinton's nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence, like the Hebrew bible, holds forth the serendipitous nature of suffering. However, theologians have tended to explore medical research from only an ethical perspective. Issues of the spirituality and the religious significance of participation in medical research have gone unnoticed by most theologians. After examining Hinton's reason for choosing aural surgery and the advance of otology through his practice and research, we shall briefly consider the significance of participating in medical research as an expression of spirituality that manifests the nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence.

Hinton's selection of aural surgery as a specialty occurred as a result of treating his mother's hearing troubles. He gives an account of the incident in a letter to his fiancée, Margaret, in August 1850.

I have had a great pleasure since I wrote to you. My mother's hearing has been entirely restored, of which I have been the humble instrument . . .
The affair was simple enough – merely a syringing properly performed,

which I should have done long ago, had it not been that I understood it had been done, and thoroughly done, repeatedly before.⁴⁷⁰

In Hinton's description of the incident, he gives an indication of the impact of her deafness as "a grievous deprivation."⁴⁷¹ Her condition and its cure became a means of benefiting others as Hinton indicates when he says in the letter: "Last night also I performed the same kindness for an old man who has been long deaf, and with almost complete success."⁴⁷² The success in treating his mother and the unnamed "old man" propelled Hinton into aural surgery. He says in the same letter to his fiancée, "Another poor person in great distress applied to me this morning, for whom also I think I shall be able to accomplish a good deal; so that my sympathies are beginning to find a little occupation."⁴⁷³ Hinton's successful treatment of his mother drove him toward aural medicine. The experience is also reflective of Hinton's redemptive nexus. His mother's suffering became a means for the benefit of others by both directing Hinton into aural medicine and supplying him with a medical procedure to treat others with similar difficulties. The only thing lacking in relation to Hinton's redemptive nexus in the letter about curing his mother is an explicit reference to how the experience reflects deification. In another letter to his mother in infirm health, he writes:

To us, dearest mother, who are in health and vigor, you are scarcely less useful now in your example of cheerfulness and patience, and thoughtfulness for everyone else, showing us how infirmity should be borne, than you were in the old days when we were the feeble ones.⁴⁷⁴

⁴⁷⁰ Hopkins, 44.

⁴⁷¹ Hopkins, 44.

⁴⁷² Hopkins, 44.

⁴⁷³ Hopkins, 44-45.

⁴⁷⁴ Hopkins, 248.

Hinton here is describing all of the characteristics of his redemptive nexus without an explicit reference to deification. Deification implicitly is the acceptance of suffering with a view to the good of others. Hinton says in The Mystery of Pain,

Man's perfect life is a life in which love can be perfect, and find no limitation; it is a life so truly lived for others, so participant with them, that utter unbounded sacrifice is possible; the limitations of this mortal state bounding us no more. It is the life of heaven.⁴⁷⁵

Thus, while Hinton fails explicitly to mention his mother's deification, the combination of her suffering with service to others implies her heavenly likeness.

Hinton began associating with Joseph Toynbee, the leading authority on aural medicine in England, in 1854. Together with Sir William Wilde, Toynbee and Hinton became "the founders of modern otology."⁴⁷⁶ Toynbee was both a morbid anatomist publishing on anatomical specimens⁴⁷⁷ and a clinician publishing case studies for the treatment of patients.⁴⁷⁸ Hinton's medical publications follow Toynbee in emphasizing both morbid anatomical analysis⁴⁷⁹ and case studies for effective clinical practice.⁴⁸⁰

"The diagnostic and therapeutic skills which he learnt at the hands of Toynbee were to be

⁴⁷⁵ Hopkins, 56.

⁴⁷⁶ Penelope Hunting, The History of the Royal Society of Medicine (London: Royal Society of Medicine Press, 2002), 90.

⁴⁷⁷ Cf. Joseph Toynbee, "Pathological and Surgical Observations on the Disease of the Ear," Medico-Chirurgical Transactions 24 (1841): 190-211. The article gives an account of forty-one dissections of ears by Toynbee. Cf. Joseph Toynbee, "Dissection of the Ears of a Deaf and Dumb Patient," Provincial Medical & Surgical Journal (1847): 126-127.

⁴⁷⁸ Cf. Joseph Toynbee, "On Osseous Tumors," Provincial Medical & Surgical Journal (1849): 533-537. The article discusses twelve cases under Toynbee's care.

⁴⁷⁹ Cf. James Hinton, "Cases Illustrative of the Pathology of the Ear," Medico-Chirurgical Transactions 39 (1856): 101-119. Hinton discusses fifty-six dissections of the ear.

⁴⁸⁰ Cf. James Hinton, "Case of Perforation of the Mastoid Cells: Subsequent Formation of an Abscess beneath the Sterno-Mastoid Muscle," Medico-Chirurgical Transactions 51 (1868): 231-239.

sufficient to last him throughout a lifetime of practice.”⁴⁸¹ Hinton surpassed Toynbee in only one regard; he successfully performed the first mastoid operation in England. Elizabeth Burton observes, “Although Toynbee recognized and suggested the possibilities of a mastoid operation, it was his assistant, James Hinton who performed the first one in England.”⁴⁸² Hinton’s successful mastoid operation contributed to the widespread acceptance of the procedure.⁴⁸³ While Hinton’s medical research predates the establishment of modern clinical trials featuring patient randomization and blinding, his work shows how careful case analysis contributes to medical practice. With the advances in otology occurring during Hinton’s career, I am surprised that he did not see his own experience of medical research as illustrative of his redemptive nexus. Certainly, the patients under his treatment suffered from various afflictions. Their suffering and Hinton’s treatment of them became a part of the growing investigation, understanding and treatment for diseases of the ear. Thus, the suffering of Hinton’s patients became a means to benefit others through more effective treatments and procedures. His patients were implicitly manifesting how God works through suffering for the good of others.

Modern clinical trials and medical research have much in common with Hinton’s theological nexus. I want briefly to outline some of the similarities to show a possible area for further theological exploration. Hinton’s nexus concerns suffering, deification, and beneficence. While, at first glimpse, the notion of deification seems to have the

⁴⁸¹ Philip Reading, “James Hinton,” Proceedings of the Royal Society of Medicine 62, no. 5 (1969): 466 of 464-468.

⁴⁸² Elizabeth Burton, The Early Victorians at Home, 1837-1861 (London: Longman, 1972), 188.

⁴⁸³ Roy Porter, The Greatest Benefit to Mankind: A Medical History of Humanity (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1997), 385. Cf. Patrick Winston Williams, “Discussion on the Technique of Operations on the Temporal Bone in Suppurative Middle-Ear Disease,” The Journal of Laryngology, Rhinology, and Otology 18 (1903): 515 of 513-531.

weakest connection with medical research, the combination of suffering and benefiting others suggests the implicit God-likeness of participants in medical research.

Studies concerning the reasons that patients participate in clinical trials give vastly different motives for participation. Some studies tend to oppose altruistic motives (a patient's hope that participation will contribute to medical knowledge and help future patients with similar maladies) against therapeutic motives (a patient's desire to benefit therapeutically from the study).⁴⁸⁴ While some scholars oppose altruistic and therapeutic motives, studies of participants in clinical trials reveal that altruistic motives and therapeutic motives are not exclusive. Jenkins and Fallowfield report that among 147 patients (n=147) who agreed to participate in cancer therapy trials, 82.3% of the patients thought that the trial offered the best treatment available.⁴⁸⁵ This is a therapeutic motivation for participation. However, beyond hoping to receive therapeutic benefit, a higher percentage of the participants also indicated altruistic reasons for participating in the trials. Altruistic reasons include ideas of helping the doctor's research (92.5% of participants) and helping other patients with the same illness (97.3% of participants).⁴⁸⁶ In another study of thirty-eight cancer patients undergoing phase I or phase II clinical trials, 82% "listed helping future cancer patients as being a 'very important' motivating

⁴⁸⁴ Christopher K. Daugherty, *et al*, "Trusting God and Medicine: Spirituality in Advanced Cancer Patients Volunteering for Clinical Trials of Experimental Agents," Psycho-Oncology 14 (2005): 136 of 135-146.

⁴⁸⁵ V. Jenkins and L. Fallowfield, "Reasons for Accepting or Declining to Participate in Randomized Clinical Trials for Cancer Therapy," British Journal of Cancer Research 82, no. 11 (2000): 1785 of 1783-1788.

⁴⁸⁶ Jenkins and Fallowfield, 1785.

factor for participating in the trial.”⁴⁸⁷ The investigators of a study of participants in a phase III trial of Pravastatin against major vascular events also stress that altruistic and therapeutic motives coexist. “Personal gain and altruism encompass a number of factors and it is not always clear whether one is more influential than the other.”⁴⁸⁸

The high incidence of altruistic motives among participants in clinical trials suggests that suffering people, while hoping to get better, recognize that their suffering can be of benefit to others. A trial participant with Systemic Lupus Erythematosus (SLE) says, “I just feel as though it’s my responsibility because I have SLE to help others as well.”⁴⁸⁹ A patient’s altruism becomes even more significant for continuing with the research when therapeutic benefit is not forthcoming. Despite enrollees’ high expectations that a trial might be therapeutically beneficial, only about five percent of participants benefit from clinical trials (phase I).⁴⁹⁰ Rosenbaum and her colleagues, however, discovered that altruistic patients are more likely to adhere to a trial’s medical regimen than those without altruistic motives.⁴⁹¹ Thus, altruistic patients are more likely to stick with a trial despite its ineffective therapeutic results assuring that the trial

⁴⁸⁷ Z. A. Nugart, *et al*, “Patient Motivations Surrounding Participation in Phase I and Phase II Clinical Trials of Cancer Chemotherapy,” British Journal of Cancer 92, no. 6 (2005): 1001 of 1001-1005.

⁴⁸⁸ Elizabeth P. Tolmie, “Understanding Why Older People Participate in Clinical Trials: the Experience of the Experience of the Scottish PROSPER participants,” Age and Aging 33, no. 4 (2004): 377 of 374-378.

⁴⁸⁹ Karen H. Costenbader, *et al*, “Factors Determining Participation in Prevention Trials Among Systemic Lupus Erythematosus Patients: A Qualitative Study,” Arthritis Care & Research 51, no. 1 (2007): 53 of 49-55.

⁴⁹⁰ Z. A. Nugart, *et al*, “Patient Motivations Surrounding Participation in Phase I and Phase II Clinical Trials of Cancer Chemotherapy,” British Journal of Cancer 92, no. 6 (2005): 1002 of 1001-1005.

⁴⁹¹ Julie Rosenbaum, *et al*, “Altruism as a Reason for Participation in Clinical Trials Was Independently Associated with Adherence,” Journal of Clinical Epidemiology 58 (2005): 1109-1114..

accomplishes its study goals. Thus, the altruistic participant insures that the research reaches completion for the good of medical knowledge and the benefit of others. I would argue that these patients show an implicit deification. While the reality that they will benefit from the clinical trial is minimal, they participate because they recognize that their contribution contributes to the accumulation of medical knowledge and the better care of others.

Hinton's work lacks concrete instances of individuals who reveal his redemptive nexus. An exploration of the individuals in the Hebrew scripture who display divine characteristics while benefiting others through suffering could add a biblical depth to Hinton's theological nexus. The serendipitous nature of their suffering opens another avenue of consideration, the serendipitous suffering of the sick that have benefitted medical research. While these individuals lack the biblical characterization of divinity, their suffering is a means of benefitting others, and by Hinton's definition, they reflect divinity for simply allowing their suffering to benefit others.

III. The Redemptive Nexus in the New Testament

Against the social background of ancient Israelite religion, we must now examine the New Testament's nexus of suffering, deification and social beneficence. Two major permutations of our nexus arise in the New Testament materials: First, Christ's divine status goes beyond the ideas of deification that we heretofore have encountered. While numerous individuals receive a deified status in the Hebrew Scripture, they are not equals or actually identified as the Hebrew God.⁴⁹² However, in the New Testament, we find a

⁴⁹² For the various attempts to explain early Christianity's mutation of monotheism, see Paul A. Rainbow, "Jewish Monotheism as the Matrix for New Testament Christology: A Review Article," Novum Testamentum 33, no. 1 (1991): 78-91. Earlier scholarship

move to actually identify and qualify Jesus as God. Second, in light of the move to identify Jesus with God, the subsequent image of deification for Christians becomes a form of christomorphism. Christology, Christian identity, and suffering in Christian experience will guide our investigation of how the New Testament picks up the Hebrew Scriptures' tradition relating to suffering, deification, and societal beneficence. We shall limit our investigation to the writings of the Gospel of Mark and Paul because the nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence is readily visible in their writings.

A. The New Testament: Christology, Christian Identity and Suffering in Mark

A survey of Markan scholarship reveals that the issues of beneficence, deification and suffering are close at hand through the ever-changing approaches to the study of the gospel. From the Christological debates, which seek the source of Markan Christology, to the recent use of narrative criticism, issues of beneficence, deification and suffering regularly emerge in Markan studies despite the scholars' change in technique. We shall briefly explore a few shifts in Markan scholarship to show how the issues of deification, suffering and beneficence occur in Markan studies.

Tradition criticism attempts to uncover the conceptual background that shaped the Gospel of Mark. Through the years, scholars have variously argued that Mark's Christology follows patterns of Hellenistic hero traditions, the Hellenistic concept of "divine man" (theios aner), or an amalgamation of OT-Jewish perspectives. One of the early attempts to argue that Mark's Jesus reflects the tradition of a Hellenistic hero is

focused on polytheistic influences from Hellenism, but recent scholarship focuses on Judaism's use of hypostasis and divine agency.

visible in Donald Riddle's analysis.⁴⁹³ Riddle argues that Mark presents Jesus as a hero for a Roman audience:

To those Romans who thought in terms of heroes – a Hercules sharing divine and human natures and giving himself to help man, A Dionysos as lord of a fellowship by means of whose mysteries the divine nature might be partaken and assimilated and redemptive salvation obtained, an Asklepios who heals and cures – Mark presented Jesus as a hero, who in his assistance to humanity was greater than one or all of these.⁴⁹⁴

More recently, Adela Yarbro Collins also uses the Hellenistic hero concept as a source for Mark's characterization of Jesus.⁴⁹⁵ While admitting that Mark's Gospel reflects both Jewish and Hellenistic traditions, Collins develops the idea that Mark employed "the *curriculum vitae*" of the Hellenistic poet-hero as a model for the Gospel. For Collins, the biographical tradition of a Hellenistic poet-hero follows a pattern that includes 1.) a commissioning and empowering by a deity, 2.) mistreatment, misunderstanding, persecution and death at the hands of the people, 3.) and vindication after death by the deity.⁴⁹⁶

For our purposes, the significance of the poet-hero tradition is that it reflects the nexus of deification, beneficence, and suffering. Compton captures the threads of deification, beneficence and suffering in his discussion of the ambiguity of the poet's life:

Thus, the poet is a representative of the god (all of these poets have versions of the well-known consecration theme in their lives), but despised

⁴⁹³ Donald W. Riddle, "The Martyr Motif in the Gospel According to Mark," Journal of Religion 4, no.4 (1924):397-410.

⁴⁹⁴ Riddle, 403.

⁴⁹⁵ Adela Yarbro Collins, "Finding Meaning in the Death of Jesus," Journal of Religion 78, no.1 (1998):175-196.

⁴⁹⁶ Collins, 187.

by society; the best and worst; a permanent riddle . . . They are all seen as best, either poetically or morally. Aesop continually saves his friends and master . . . He receives divine consecration for his poetic career, and eventually receives the semi-deification of hero cult. But he is also worst of men . . . he is framed for theft of a sacred temple vessel; he is stoned and/or thrown from a cliff.⁴⁹⁷

Elements of deification are visible in both the commission-empowerment and the vindication of the poet. For example, Aesop's commission-empowerment arises because of his assistance and feeding of a priestess who is lost in the countryside. In light of Aesop's kindness to the priestess, she prays to Isis to grant speech to the mute, Aesop. Isis grants Aesop speech and instructs the Nine Muses to impart something of their own giftedness. Thus, Aesop's commission-empowerment gives him the abilities of the Muses who are semi-deities.⁴⁹⁸ According to one text of "Life of Aesop," we find another indication of deification when Aesop erects a temple in appreciation to the Muses and places amongst the statues of the Muses an image of himself, not Apollo.⁴⁹⁹ Finally, Aesop's vindication also indicates a level of deification. His adversaries stem the plague befalling them by worshipping the slain poet.

Elements of suffering and beneficence are also visible in the poet-hero. In the "Life of Aesop," the poet's suffering ultimately works in a beneficial capacity because it reveals the wrongs of the people and establishes a way to rectify their behavior via the

⁴⁹⁷ Todd Compton, "The Trial of the Satirist: Poetic Vitae (Aesop, Archilochus, Homer) as Background for Plato's Apology," *American Journal of Philology* 111, no. 3 (1990): 342-343.

⁴⁹⁸ Cf. John Dillery, "Aesop, Isis, and the Heliconian Muses," *Classical Philology* 94, no. 3 (1999): 269.

⁴⁹⁹ Cf. William F. Hansen, *Anthology of Ancient Greek Popular Literature* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), 110, note 9.

establishment of the hero's cult. When the people wrongly mistreat, judge and punish the poet, they unwittingly condemn themselves and reveal that they themselves are in the wrong. "The poet is, as it were, the unwanted moral mirror of the community, and the trial is the moment of mirroring, of ambiguous moral reciprocity."⁵⁰⁰ In condemning the poet, the community condemns itself. In the case of Aesop, the people subsequently suffer famine and only avoid further judgment by worshiping the poet as cult hero. Thus, the poet's suffering works ultimately toward the beneficence of the society through exposing their wrong which culminates in the hero's cult. Margaret Visser, noting the regularity of the pattern, says, "Indeed, a city's enemy may turn out to be not only beneficent after the death but actually a hero, honored with a monument and worshiped by the people."⁵⁰¹

Thus, when scholars appeal to the Hellenistic hero traditions in interpreting Mark's Christology, whether in terms of hero or poetic *vitae*, the elements of our redemptive nexus arise in the discussion of Mark's portrayal of Jesus. Jesus receives deified status; he suffers, and the suffering benefits others.

Elements of our redemptive nexus also appear in discussions of the beginning of the Gospel. Some scholars have sought to link Mark's Christological incipit (Mark 1:1) to the tradition of the Greco-Roman ruler-cult by way of the Priene inscription, which established the observation of Caesar Augustus' birthday as the New Year.⁵⁰² The

⁵⁰⁰ Compton, 344.

⁵⁰¹ Margaret Visser, "Worship Your Enemy: Aspects of the Cult of Heroes in Ancient Greece," Harvard Theological Review 75, no. 4 (1982): 403 of 403-428.

⁵⁰² Craig Evans, "Mark's Incipit and the Priene Calendar Inscription: From Jewish Gospel to Greco-Roman Gospel," Journal of Greco-Roman Christianity and Judaism 1, no. 1 (2000): 67-81.

parallels between Mark 1:1 and the inscription are fascinating. The key portion reads in part:

Since Providence, which has ordered all things and is deeply interested in our life, has set in most perfect order by giving us Augustus, whom she filled with virtue that he might benefit humankind, sending him as savior, both for us and our descendants, that he might end war and arrange all things, and since he, Caesar, by his appearance [excelled even our anticipations], surpassing all previous benefactors, and not even leaving to posterity any hope of surpassing what he has done, and since the birthday of the god (θεοῦ) Augustus was the beginning (ἤρξεεν) of the good tidings (εὐαγγελίων) for the world that came by reason of him. . .⁵⁰³

Ben Witherington sees an explicit connection between the language of the inscription and the beginning of Mark.

The emperor is called a god, and we are informed that his birth or advent on the human scene already augurs good things for the world. If Mark has in mind such familiar inscriptions (which became increasingly common throughout the empire as the emperor cult spread in the first century A.D.), then it would appear that he is making a parallel claim about the divinity of Christ.⁵⁰⁴

If the opening of Mark elicits connections with deification in the ruler cult, elements within the Priene inscription and the ruler cult clash with Markan theology. The inscription praises Augustus because of his euergetism (benefaction). However, the Hellenistic-Roman concept of euergetism differs strongly from anything that we find in

⁵⁰³ Adam Winn, The Purpose of Mark's Gospel: An Early Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 97.

⁵⁰⁴ Ben Witherington, The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 69.

Mark. Euergetism is “the public generosity of the rich.”⁵⁰⁵ Peter Garnesy insists that euergetism is not altruistic but that the euergetists acted ultimately as speculators to benefit from their beneficence.⁵⁰⁶ Several authors liken the euergetists to the modern industrialists:

Euergetism, an important aspect of ancient social life, is comparatively unfamiliar today, though it would not have seemed strange to the great self-made industrialists of Victorian Britain. Many a textile manufacturer or mill owner from Yorkshire or Devonshire, after making his fortune from industry, would use his wealth not only to build a fine residence in parkland for himself but to endow educational institutions, libraries, or other civic amenities – this quite apart from benefits offered to his workers themselves.⁵⁰⁷

The ostentatious nature of euergetism was repulsive to many Greek and Roman writers. Cicero describes such patrons as those who “are generous in their gifts not so much by natural inclinations as by reason of the lure of honor; they simply want to seem beneficent” (*De officiis* 1.44).⁵⁰⁸ Mark’s gospel presents Jesus’ beneficence not in his giving out of largesse but in his giving of himself in suffering. Terms relating to euergetism are absent from Mark. In the distinction between giving out of wealth and radical giving of the self in suffering, the Markan narrative confronts us with a different understanding of beneficence. The first half of the gospel (chapters 1-8) presents Jesus as a miracle-working marvel. The second half, starting at 8:27, emphasizes Jesus’ self-

⁵⁰⁵ Peter Garnesy, *Famine and Food Supply in the Graeco-Roman World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989), 82f.

⁵⁰⁶ Garnesy, 82f.

⁵⁰⁷ Richard Stoneman, *Palmyra and Its Empire: Zenobia’s Revolt Against Rome* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1995), 63.

⁵⁰⁸ Cited by C. R. Whittaker, “The Poor,” *The Romans*, ed. Andrea Giardina (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1993), 294.

giving suffering. Marie Noonan Sabin emphasizes the theological significance in this Markan shift:

In the second part of his Gospel, Mark develops this idea, showing that Jesus in suffering, even more than in power, reveals what God is like . . . There is a mystery here not easily articulated. The first part of Mark's Gospel is filled with the miraculous; the second part is filled with mystery. Having miraculous powers is what we more readily associate with being God's image. It is difficult to see God's image in suffering and death. But throughout the second part of his Gospel, Mark indicates how Jesus shows and teaches that God reverses our natural expectations and gives us "second sight," as it were, by which conventional human wisdom is turned upside down.⁵⁰⁹

While Mark begins in the incipit with echoes of the ruler-cult, the thrust of the Gospel reveals that Jesus benefits humanity via his suffering and not any power, privilege or wealth. Witherington seems to intuitively recognize this difference between Mark's incipit and the Priene inscription when he says, "The first verse, then signals that what follows, however stark and full of suffering and sorrow, is paradoxically not bad news or a tragedy, but rather good news, like the announcement of a birth or a major success of an emperor."⁵¹⁰

If Mark is intentionally echoing ideas from the ruler-cult in his opening, he produces a very different route to deification than that experienced by the Hellenistic and Roman rulers. I would argue in light of Mark's incipit that Mark uses the ideology of Roman deification but changes the semantic field that was associated with it. In the

⁵⁰⁹ Marie Noonan Sabin, The Gospel according to Mark (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2006), 158.

⁵¹⁰ Witherington, 69.

Hellenistic-Roman paradigm, the route to deification is through “conquest and euergetism.”⁵¹¹ The Priene inscription shows the close relationship between deification, conquest and beneficence. While the Priene inscription describes Augustus’ accomplishment of ending war, conquest is the route by which wars cease in Roman ideology. We can see a similar paradigm in the description of Julius Caesar’s deification in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*. The poem begins with a description of Julius’ military and civic accomplishments:

Caesar is adored as a god in his own city: whom though alike renowned both in arms and arts, not wars ended by triumphs, his prudent administration at home, or the rapid glory of his conquests, contributed more to fix among the stars, than his own progeny. (XV, 746-750)

However, his military and civic accomplishments pale in comparison to the greatest work of his rule, the adoption of Augustus as his son and progeny: “For of all Caesar’s acts, none redounds more to his honor than that he is the father of Augustus” (XV, 750-751).

The poem concludes with the deification of the emperor after his assassination:

Meantime, snatch the hero’s spirit from his wounded body, and change it to a beaming train of light; that the deified Julius may ever, from his heavenly throne, smile upon the Roman capital and forum. (XV, 840-841)

Thus, we see the basic paradigm for Roman apotheosis occurring via conquest and benefaction, in this case civic accomplishments. The semantic field for Roman apotheosis is writ large with the language of conquest and benefaction. However, before considering how the Gospel of Mark changes the semantic field, it is necessary to show

⁵¹¹ Brian Bosworth, “Augustus, the Res Gestae and Hellenistic Theories of Apotheosis,” The Journal of Roman Studies 89 (1999): 2.

how Mark appropriates the paradigm of Roman apotheosis. Other elements in Julius' deification in Ovid include portents of the ruler's death and, as already alluded in Julius' greatest benefaction, the subsequent succession of the ruler's work through his heir, Augustus. We must consider the portents and ruler's succession because Mark also reflects a similar interest.

According to Ovid, the gods could not change Julius' fated murder but "give no obscure hints of the approaching death" (XV, 784-785).⁵¹² The portents of the impending death include terrible sounds from the sky, the darkening of the sun, and unfavorable events relating to the sacred places.

They tell us, that arms, rattling amid a dark host of clouds, the clarion's dreadful sound (*terribilesque tubas*), and the alarm of the trumpet, heard in the sky, gave warning of the hideous crime. The troubled image of Phoebus too gave but faint light, and torches were seen to blaze amid the stars. Drops of blood fell from heaven in showers, and the morning star was overpowered with dusky hue: the chariot of the moon was also dyed with blood. In every place the infernal owl gave fatal omens; in every place the ivory statues wept; and awful music and threatening sounds were heard in the sacred groves. (XV. 783-793)

Virgil's Georgics⁵¹³ also recounts portents of darkness, loud sounds, and strange events within the temples at the time of Julius' death.

Who dares call Sun a liar? He it is who often warns of dark revolts afoot, conspiracy and cancerous growth of war. He too, when Caesar fell, showed pity for Rome, hiding his radiant head in lurid gloom, that a guilty age feared everlasting night. (I. 464-469)

⁵¹² Ovid, Metamorphoses, trans. W. R. Whittaker (London: Longman, Hurst, Rees, Orme and Brown, 1822).

⁵¹³ Virgil, The Georgics, trans. L. P. Watson (New York: Penguin, 1982).

And a voice was widely heard through silent woods, a mighty voice
(*ingens vox*) . . . (I. 476-477)

In temples ivories wept and bronzes sweated. (I. 480)

Thus, the portents associated with Roman apotheosis include the darkening of the sun, loud noises, and strange sacral events.

We find the same elements in Mark's depiction of the crucifixion. Darkness comes over the land in Mark 15:33. Twice, Jesus cries out with a "great voice" in Mark 15:34 (φωνη μεγαλη) and 15:37 (φωνην μεγαλην), and the temple's curtain is rent from top to bottom at 15:38. At this point, we find the Roman centurion making his confession: "Truly this man was a/the son of god" (15:39). Mark is employing traditional Roman portents associated with apotheosis. Shiner suggests that Mark uses "four events that his audience might regard as motivating the centurion to regard Jesus as a divine being: the loud cry with which he died, the darkness from noon to three o'clock which preceded his death, the splitting temple veil, and the rapidity of Jesus' death."⁵¹⁴ Leaving aside the rapidity of Jesus' death, we must consider Mark's use of the darkness, the "great voice," and the torn veil. We will add another element closely associated with portents from Roman religious tradition, the centurion's chance observation, which works as a traditional Roman omen.

Scholars readily understand the darkness as a portent. Donald Senior comments on the darkness by saying, "Frightful portents such as an eclipse of the sun at the death of

⁵¹⁴ Whitney T. Shiner, "The Ambiguous Pronouncement of the Centurion," Journal for the Study of the New Testament 22, no. 3 (2000): 9.

a great personage were stock themes of ancient literature and Mark's reference to darkness has a similar intent."⁵¹⁵ Other scholars mention the idea of the portent of darkness accompanying the death of "great men."⁵¹⁶ More problematic to our argument is the issue of the "great voice." How can we equate Jesus' own cries with the loud sounds associated with supernatural portents connected with apotheosis? Does Mark give us an indication that he wants Jesus' cries associated with the supernatural? Besides Mark's use of "great voice" in 15:34 (φωνη μεγαλη) and 15:37 (φωνην μεγαλην), he only uses this expression at 1:26 (φωνη μεγαλη) and 5:7 (φωνη μεγαλη) where unclean spirits cry out to Jesus. Thus, the use of "great voice" in the passion could indicate that Mark wants his readers to see the cries from the cross as supernatural. A further indication of the supernatural nature of Jesus' cries is the Markan literary use of "voice" for astonishing revelations from beyond the human realm. Frederick W. Danker insists that φωνη "is reserved by Mark for extraordinary communication."⁵¹⁷ Brown describes the restrictive usage in the following way:

It first occurs in 1:3 in reference to the prophetic message of John the Baptist, "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (Isa. 40:3). Subsequently it is used to describe the unexpected intervening voice of God (Bath Qol), which declares Jesus to be "my son" (1:11; 9:7), and in reference to the alarmed cry of demoniacs, who likewise recognize that

⁵¹⁵ Donald Senior, The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1991), 122.

⁵¹⁶ Cf. Ernest Best, The Temptation and the Passion: The Markan Soteriology (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005), 98, and Bonnie Bowman Thurston, Preaching Mark (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2001), 177.

⁵¹⁷ Cited in Scott Gregory Brown, Mark's Other Gospel (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University, 2005), 204.

Jesus is “the Holy One of God” and “the Son of the Most High God” (1:26; 5:7).⁵¹⁸

Mark’s usage of “voice” suggest that the he wants us to consider Jesus’ cry as extraordinary, but I think that John Iwe, following Gundry, goes too far in suggesting that the cry’s supernatural nature is “so powerful that it rends the veil of the temple.”⁵¹⁹ Like the darkness, Mark is portraying Jesus’ cry as portentous in character. However, we must now mention the implication of the torn veil as a portent in Mark. Sharyn Dowd appropriately interprets the significance of the torn curtain. She says,

A Greco-Roman audience would expect the death of a ruler to be accompanied not only by astronomical portents, but also by supernatural events associated with cultic places or images . . . The tearing of the temple veil at Jesus’ death would have meant to the Markan audience that this was indeed the death of a king.⁵²⁰

Interpreters usually emphasize that the torn curtain shows the open access to God procured through Christ’s sacrificial death or the divine judgment on Israel.⁵²¹ However, given the context of the Markan passion immediately culminating in the centurion’s confession, Mark is leading his readers to consider Jesus’ divine status using common themes from Roman apotheosis. While the Latin poets employ portents of darkness, loud noises and strange sacral occurrences, Mark uses these elements to show Jesus’ status as

⁵¹⁸ Brown, Mark’s Other Gospel, 204.

⁵¹⁹ John Chijioko Iwe, Jesus in the Synagogue of Capernaum: the Pericope and Its Programmatic Character for the Gospel of Mark (Rome: Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 1999), 180.

⁵²⁰ Sharyn Echols Dowd, Reading Mark: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Second Gospel (Macon, GA: Smyth & Helwys Publishing, 2001), 162.

⁵²¹ Cf. Senior, The Passion of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark, 127.

the divine son. Since the Jewish temple was bereft of images, Mark records the ripped curtain as a strange sacral event.

The image of a centurion at the cross could itself be an omen that Mark is employing in the Roman fashion of kledonomanacy. Tissol describes kledonomanacy, divinatory wordplay, as “an element both of the Romans’ religious experience and of their understanding of how language functions.”⁵²² Kledonomanacy refers to occasions when unwitting human utterances contain divine significance.

For the gods can overhear a human utterance, if they choose, and give it new and unforeseen interpretations. Though the speakers are unaware of the divine interpretation granted to their words, it is accessible to some human beings, of augural sensitivity, who may also hear them.⁵²³

In the Christian tradition, I would suggest that a perfect illustration of kledonomanacy is St. Augustine’s conversion.

I heard from a neighboring house a voice, as of boy or girl, I know not, chanting, and oft repeating, “Take up and read; Take up and read.” Instantly, my countenance altered, I begin to think intently whether children were wont in any kind of play to sing such words: nor could I remember ever to have heard the like. So checking the torrent of my tears, I arose; interpreting it to be no other than a command from God to open the book, and read the first chapter I should find. (Confessions IX, 29)⁵²⁴

Thus, in the case of St. Augustine, a child’s playful expression becomes a divine utterance.

⁵²² Garth Tissol, The Face of Nature (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 30.

⁵²³ Tissol, 30.

⁵²⁴ Augustine, The Confessions, trans. Edward Pusey (New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1920), 170.

Mark's use of kledonomanancy via the centurion's statement hearkens back to another famous account of a centurion who unwittingly speaks a divine utterance. Livy recounts the role that a centurion played in the second founding of Rome. After the defeat of the Gauls (386 BCE), Camillus argues against resettling the capitol to Veii. As he concluded his oration, a Roman centurion arrives at the Forum and says, "Standard bearer, plant your standard; here will be the best place for us to stay" (*Signifer, statue signum; hic manebimus optime*).⁵²⁵ According to Livy, the Senate took the centurion's words as an omen to remain in Rome (V. 55). Livy summarizes the role played by the centurion's chance words in the following way: "But while the matter was still in doubt, a speech uttered by chance decided it" (*Sed rem dubiam decrevit uox opportune emissa*).⁵²⁶

The significance that the centurion's statement plays in Mark is comparable. The great debate of Mark's gospel surrounds the identity and nature of Jesus as God's beloved son and Christ. We find the gospel punctuated for the reader with expressions of Jesus' divine status. The incipit (1:1) gives the first indication of Jesus as "Son of God", but this status receives divine approbation at the baptism (1:11) and the transfiguration (9:7). Supernatural demons also recognize Jesus' as the Son of God (3:11 and 5:7). Until the centurion's statement, the declaration of Jesus as Son of God is limited to those with supernatural knowledge such as the author-narrator, God, and the demons. The point of Mark's use of kledonomanancy is that the centurion's confession remains supernatural despite the speaker's inadequate understanding. An appreciation of Mark's use of kledonomanancy enlightens and focuses much of the scholarly debate about the centurion's

⁵²⁵ Cf. Gary B. Miles, *Livy: Reconstructing Early Rome* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1997): 88.

⁵²⁶ Cf. Jane D. Chaplin, *Livy's Exemplary History* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 87.

confession. Regardless of the debate of biblical scholars concerning the centurion's understanding of the confession, Mark's use of kledonmancy means that the significance of the utterance rests in the divine purpose for the hearers, which Mark shapes by the aforementioned supernatural utterances within the Gospel.

We have seen that Mark employs portentous themes from Roman apotheosis to characterize Jesus' divine status. These themes include the darkening of the sun, loud noises, strange occurrences at the temple, and a divinatory wordplay uttered by a Roman centurion. The Gospel of Mark also uses one more theme related to Roman apotheosis that we must now consider. Apotheosis works to establish a lineage. Mark reflects a similar interest in his characterization and development of discipleship.

Concerning the progeny of the deified ruler, Ovid insists that Julius' gift of a successor is more significant than his conquests and civic accomplishments. "For of all Caesar's acts, none redounds more to his honor than that he is the father of Augustus" (*Metamorphoses* XV, 750-751). The insistence on the magnitude of the ruler's progeny is part of Roman political ideology. Virgil's *Aeneid* (VI. 789-794) also shows the political ideology of the greatness of Julius' progeny, Augustus:

Here is Caesar, and all Iūlus' seed (Latin = *progenies*), destined to pass beneath the sky's mighty vault. This, this is he, whom thou so oft hearest promised to thee, Augustus Caesar, son of a god, who shall again set up the Golden Age in Latium amid fields where Saturn once reigned . . . ⁵²⁷

Virgil presents Iūlus as progenitor and namesake for the Julian gens to establish an ideological hope that the Roman ruler will bring about a Golden Age. "This legend was

⁵²⁷ H. Rushton Fairclough, *Virgil with an English Translation: Volume One* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1938), 561f.

already well established in Italy, where many of the great families took especial pride in tracing their ancestry back to Aeneas and his band of Trojan heroes.”⁵²⁸ Mark Edward

Clark recognizes how the ideology worked among the Romans:

We have an abundance of proof that *spes* was part of the traditional ideology of the republic well before the time of Octavian and that the political idea of hope in a charismatic personality became especially popular toward the end of the republic. This development suggests that during the period of the upheaval after 44 B.C. a new need arose for a single figure who provided confidence and hope of civil blessings.⁵²⁹

Of course, getting the public to place their hope in a leader ultimately works to legitimate the new leader’s rule. The Aeneid ultimately functions to legitimate Julius’ progeny, Augustus, as the expected leader: “He is the promised ruler of divine descent who is to bring peace and a return of the Golden Age to the world.”⁵³⁰ Augustus and subsequent emperors carefully acted to foster their divine ancestry as a means of political legitimation. Coins minted during Augustus’ reign declare *Caesar Divi filius* on one side and *divus Iulius* on the other.⁵³¹ “The cult of the *divi* (emperors deified after their deaths) took up an increasingly larger segment of the liturgical calendar, and official propaganda proclaimed with increasing intensity the supernatural ‘virtues’ of the princes.”⁵³² While the emperors avoided receiving divine status in their lifetime at Rome

⁵²⁸ Clyde Pharr, *Vergil’s Aeneid* (Mundelein: Bolchazy-Carducci Publishers, 1998), 2.

⁵²⁹ Mark Edward Clark, “*Spes* in the Imperial Cult: ‘The Hope of Augustus,’” *Numen* 30, no. 1 (July, 1983): 95.

⁵³⁰ Pharr, 2.

⁵³¹ Colleen M. Conway, *Behold the Man: Jesus and Greco-Roman Masculinity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 44.

⁵³² Yves Bonnefoy, ed., *Roman and European Mythologies*, trans. Wendy Doniger (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 65.

(with the exception of Caligula and Commodus), they allowed their association with the deified predecessors to bolster their political standing and mystique.

Around the time of the composition of Mark, a new dynasty of Roman emperors, the Flavians, arose who lacked a claim to divine lineage. Unlike the Julio-Claudian lineage “with its claim of descent from Venus through Anchises and Aeneas,”⁵³³ the Flavians were plebeians without ties to Rome’s patrician families. According to Suetonius, Vespasian, the first Flavian emperor, “lacked a certain dignity and majesty” (Div. Vesp. 7.2-3) which he ultimately acquired via omens, portents and miracles associated with his rise to power. We should understand the significance of Suetonius’ reference to Vespasian lacking “dignity” and “majesty.” Vespasian’s lack of “dignity” (*auctoritas*) and “majesty” (*maiestas*) touches on his lack of a divine lineage. According to Richard King, “*Maiestas* was important to imperial ideology and politics as the term applied to the divine essence of the state (*res publica*), the senate, or the emperor.”⁵³⁴ A lack of *maiestas* signals a lack of divine approval to rule as an emperor. However, without deified descent, Vespasian procured his majesty (*maiestas*) through association with portents, omens and miracles. “Much more supernatural decoration is found in the story of Vespasian than elsewhere in the history of the early Caesars with the exception of Augustus.”⁵³⁵ Central in Vespasian’s accumulation of supernatural decoration are two healing stories:

⁵³³ Neil W. Bernstein, In the Image of the Ancestors: Narratives of Kinship in Flavian Epic (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2008), 161.

⁵³⁴ Richard Jackson King, Desiring Rome (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2006), 139.

⁵³⁵ Richmond Lattimore, “Portents and Prophecies in Connection with the Emperor Vespasian,” The Classical Journal 29, no. 6 (1934): 449.

Recently and indeed unexpectedly made emperor, he still lacked a certain dignity and majesty. Yet these also came to him. A common man who had lost his sight and another who was lame approached him together as he sat before the tribunal, begging for the remedy for their ailments which Serapis had revealed in a dream; for he could heal eyes by spitting upon them and make whole a leg if he deigned to touch it with his heel. Although he had little faith that this could possibly succeed and indeed did not dare to put it to the test, finally, at the insistence of his friends, he undertook both actions in public before an assembly and met with success. At the same time, with the guidance of seers, some vessels of ancient workmanship were dug up in a sacred spot at Tegea in Arcadia, bearing an image very like that of Vespasian.⁵³⁶

Thus, according to Suetonius, *auctoritas* and *maiestas* come to Vespasian through his performance of miracles. Thus, the Flavian lineage finds legitimation through Vespasian's miracles. Tacitus gives a variation on the miracles. According to Tacitus, Vespasian heals a blind person and an individual with a crippled hand (Histories IV. 81). However, despite the variation, the purpose remains the same: The miracles "mark the favour of heaven and a certain partiality of the gods toward" Vespasian.⁵³⁷

I would insist that intriguing parallels exist between the Gospel of Mark and the legitimation of the Flavian dynasty. Mark portrays Jesus healing blindness, paralysis and a crippled hand.

Mark's readers would certainly have seen the similarity between this Markan account and the recent reports of Vespasian's healings. The temporal proximity of Mark's composition and Vespasian's healings

⁵³⁶ Suetonius, *Lives of the Caesars*, translated by Catherine Edwards (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000): 266.

⁵³⁷ Tacitus, *The Histories: Volume II*, translated by Clifford H. Moore (Cambridge: Loeb-Harvard University Press, 1931), 159.

makes it highly plausible that the evangelist purposefully created a parallel with the Flavian propaganda. By including miracle stories that parallel the actions of the emperor (3:1-6; 8:22-26), Mark is able to highlight the polemical purpose of all healing pericopes. He not only demonstrates for his readers that Jesus had already performed these remarkable healings performed by Vespasian, but also that Jesus performed more miracles, many of which surpassed those of the emperor.⁵³⁸

Mark also shows an interest in establishing a type of deified lineage for Jesus' disciples that emphasizes the founder's authority, but, unlike the imperial purpose of political legitimation, Mark uses his idea of a deified lineage to bolster his understanding of discipleship as suffering and service. We must now examine Mark's deified lineage and understanding of discipleship as suffering and service because they clearly reflect issues of suffering, deification and beneficence.

Mark establishes Jesus' lineage through a unique characterization of true membership in Jesus' family immediately following his appointing the twelve apostles. Unlike Matthew and Luke, the Markan gospel portrays Jesus in conflict with his family at 3:19b-35. The passage is an example of Markan bracketing where two stories intertwine. "The effect of the juxtaposition of the two incidents is to parallel the accusation of Jesus' relatives ('he is beside himself,' v 21) with that of the scribes ('he is possessed by Beelzebul,' v 22; 'he has an unclean spirit,' v 30)."⁵³⁹ Mark collates the stories to depict the types of opposition that Jesus faced, misunderstanding from his family and insult from the religious authorities. In response to misunderstanding of the family, Jesus asks

⁵³⁸ Adam Winn, The Purpose of Mark's Gospel: An Early Christian Response to Roman Imperial Propaganda, (Tübingen: Mohr Siebeck, 2008), 185.

⁵³⁹ Richard Bauckham, Jude and the Relatives of Jesus in the Early Church (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2004), 47.

(3:33), “Who are my mother and my brothers?” He answers the question by looking at those who are around him and saying (3:34b-35), “Here are my mother and brothers. Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” Thus, Jesus redefines his family to include those who share a commonality of purpose (doing the will of God), not merely biological descent.

The term “will” in noun form (θέλημα) occurs only here at Mark 3:35. To fill out the meaning of the “will of God,” we will briefly trace the Markan use of the verbal forms of “will” (θέλω). Two broad uses are visible: the term occurs in conversations and in instructions. We will notice in both the conversational and instructional uses of “will” that Mark crafts an opposition between the divine will that is to characterize Jesus’ followers and the Roman-royal use of will characteristic of power and privilege.

The conversational use of “will” develops a basic dualism between appropriate and inappropriate responses to human volition. In Mark, four passages use the verbal form of “will” (θέλω) twice. Remarkably, the passages contrast Jesus’ approach to appropriate and inappropriate expressions of human desire with regal / political approaches to desire. While Jesus confronts human desire with authority, the regal examples betray ineffectual and self-serving approaches to human volition. We can summarize the four contrasting episodes in the following way:

Players	First Use	Second Use	Result
Jesus and Leper	A leper wills healing of Jesus (1:40).	Jesus is willing and heals the leper (1:41)	The leper is healed.
Herod and Herodias	Herod promises Herodias whatever she wills (6:22).	Herodias wills the head of John (6:25).	Herod, to save face, beheads John.
Jesus, James and John	James and John will that Jesus do whatever they request (10:35).	Jesus enquires what James and John wills (10:36).	Jesus instructs the disciples that unlike the rulers they must be servants.
Pilate, chief priests and crowd	Pilate asks the crowd's will about releasing Jesus (15:9).	Pilate then asks the crowd and priests what they will have him do with Jesus (15:12).	Pilate satisfies crowd's desire by delivering Jesus to crucifixion.

Jesus' example shows that when the will seeks the good, as in the case of a leper's desire for health, solidarity with such a will is an obligation. However, when the will seeks self-aggrandizement as in the case of James and John, Jesus cannot enter solidarity with their desire. The royal examples of Herod and Pilate display the ineffectual results of solidarity where self-aggrandizement is central. Unlike, Jesus who seeks the good for others, the royal occurrences result in the deaths of John the Baptist and Jesus. Thus, these four episodes help to enlighten appropriate and inappropriate forms of volition. The family of Jesus that does the "will of God" seeks the good and not self-aggrandizement, which necessarily ends in harm for others.

The instructional usage of "will" (θέλω) in its verbal forms further explains the Markan understanding of what makes for appropriate expressions of human volition. Mark's Jesus gives four instructions to the disciples using "will" in the section that

focuses on preparing the disciples to understand Jesus' passion (8:27 - 10:52). This same section has the three passion predictions. The relevant instructions are as follows:

- If any want (θέλει) to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. (8:34)
- For those who want (θέλη) to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake, and for the sake of the gospel, will save it. (8:35)
- Whoever wants (θέλει) to be first must be last of all and servant of all. (9:35)
- You know that among the Gentiles those whom they recognize as their rulers lord it over them, and their great ones are tyrants over them. But it is not so among you; but whoever wishes (θέλη) to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wishes (θέλη) to be first among you must be slave of all. (10:42-44)

Mark again shows a basic conflict between the royal volition and Jesus' ethic of sacrificial service to others. The royal approach seeks self-aggrandizement, the amassing of wealth and recognition that was characteristic of Roman euergetism, but Mark's Jesus insists that his followers must become servants and slaves to others. They must be willing to lose their life for the sake of Jesus. Followers of Jesus must be willing to bear their cross, Rome's instrument of execution, rather than perpetuating the ethic of self-aggrandizement that was characteristic of Roman euergetism. Thus, Jesus' disciples, according to Mark, must be willing to be victims of the royal machine of execution rather than support its self-aggrandizing policies. Joanna Dewey says,

The cross, after all, is an instrument of execution. Crucifixion was a cruel, shameful, and legal means of execution reserved by Roman imperial

authorities primarily for slaves and rebels, low-class troublemakers. Anyone questioning Roman authority – as someone living the life of the new age necessarily did – was from Roman perspective a potential or actual troublemaker, and political authorities believed in preemptive action against possible threats.⁵⁴⁰

When Mark's Jesus insists that a disciple must be a servant (διάκονος) and a slave (δοῦλος) of all, Mark undercuts the stratification of society common in Rome. Mark, thus, erases status and privilege as a valid prerogative for a follower of Jesus. Christians affect the world not through power and privilege but through service to others and sacrifice, if need be, at the hands of the authorities.

In summary, we can say that Mark carefully constructs his use of the verb “will” to establish a contrast between his understanding of doing the “will of God” and the Roman-royal approach to power and privilege. Jesus as “son of God,” invites those who are willing to follow his example to become part of God's family. However, becoming a member of Jesus' family is not without hazards. Performing the “will of God” risks the displeasure of the political machine. John the Baptist and Jesus exemplify the danger. To make this explicitly clear, Mark brackets the mission of the Twelve around the story of the beheading of John the Baptist. Mark 6:7-11 recounts the commission of the Twelve. However, the report about the results of the mission (6:12-13 and 6:30) are interrupted by the Baptist's beheading. James Edwards says that John's martyrdom “exemplifies the consequences of following Jesus in a world of greed, decadence, power,

⁵⁴⁰ Joanna Dewey, “‘Let Them Renounce Themselves and Take up Their Cross’: A Feminist Reading of Mark 8:34 in Mark's Social and Narrative World,” Biblical Theology Bulletin 34, no. 3 (2004): 101 of 98 – 104.

and wealth.”⁵⁴¹ The collation of the stories of the mission of the Twelve with Herod’s slaying of John is significant. The disciples, like John, dangerously arouse the attention of imperial authority upon themselves (6:14). Like Jesus, they are now the agents of preaching, exorcism and healing. The irony of the disciples’ danger at the hands of imperial authority is significant. While on the one hand, Rome’s emperors and their heirs receive prestige and legitimation through Vespasian’s miracles, the disciples and Jesus receive suspicion, persecution and martyrdom as God’s family who serves others.

We must now briefly relate our discoveries in Mark to our triad of suffering, deification and beneficence. Mark makes at least four connections between Jesus and the apotheosis of Roman emperors to present Jesus’ deified status. First, Mark begins his story of Jesus with the incipit (1:1), which echoes Augustus’ divinity in the Priene Calendar. Second, portents at Jesus death, similar to those that occur at an emperor’s apotheosis, sustain Mark’s deified presentation of Jesus. Third, Jesus healings of the blind, paralytic and crippled hand have a similarity to the legitimation of Vespasian. Fourth, like Roman apotheosis that legitimated the status of an emperor’s progeny, Jesus redefines family so that his progeny receives kinship with the divine family through doing the “will of God.” However, the deified status that Jesus shares with his disciples comes with suffering. Suffering is the new semantic field for the Markan deified. To do the will of God is to take a cross upon oneself or to have one’s head placed upon the imperial platter. Suffering is for Mark a concomitant of kinship with God and performing God’s will. The will of God involves serving others not out of abundance

⁵⁴¹ James R. Edwards, The Gospel according to Mark Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co.,2002), 183.

and power, as in the euergatism of the Empire, but in acts of teaching, healing and fellowship for the beneficence of others. Dowd and Malbon say,

It is not suffering or death for its own sake that is being advocated for Jesus and his followers (the Markan Jesus has no martyr complex) but rather the strength to serve others, especially those lowest in the evaluation of conventional society, even if such service may result in suffering or death at the hands of the powerful of that society.⁵⁴²

Clearly, Mark links Jesus' deified status to the disciples through his new understanding of family, but kinship with Jesus demands service to others and brings suffering at the same time. Threads of deification, suffering and the beneficence of others interweave throughout the Gospel of Mark.

B. The New Testament: The Redemptive Nexus in Paul

The redemptive nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence appears in the writings of Paul⁵⁴³ via his experiences of hardships. To appreciate the theological significance of Paul's understanding of hardships, we will consider the Greco-Roman background of Paul's *peristasis* catalogues. Then we will examine three of the catalogues to see how Paul employs them. Finally, we will examine a passage that is not properly a *peristasis* catalogue but is an instance of *peristasis* that shows how Paul employed the concept in relation to a personal bout with illness. The passage concerns Paul's physical weakness at Galatia (Galatians 4:12-20). Among the texts that we will

⁵⁴² Sharyn Dowd and Elizabeth Struthers Malbon, "The Significance of Jesus' Death in Mark: Narrative Context and Authorial Audience," Journal of Biblical Literature 125, no. 2 (2006): 278 of 271-297.

⁵⁴³ We are limiting our exploration of Paul to the letters that scholars generally accept as authentic from the apostle (Romans, I Corinthians, II Corinthians, Galatians, Philippians, I Thessalonians, and Philemon). Cf. Leander E. Keck, Paul and His Letters (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1988), 5.

consider, 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 and Galatians 4:12-2 are significant because they use Paul's understanding of *peristasis* in relation to his own physical infirmities. We shall see that the texts are laden with ideas of deification, suffering and beneficence.

Biblical scholars have come to identify Paul's lists of hardships⁵⁴⁴ as *peristasis* catalogues because of their similarity to lists of hardships in other Greco-Roman literature.⁵⁴⁵ Fitzgerald summarizes the ancient use of the catalogues in the following way:

Peristasis catalogues serve to legitimate the claims made about a person and show him to be virtuous because *peristaseis* have a revelatory and probative function in regard to character. Since it is axiomatic in the ancient world that adversity is the litmus test of character, a person's virtuous attitude and action while under duress furnish the proof that he is a man of genuine worth and/or a true philosopher.⁵⁴⁶

For the purpose of the present work, we will show how the ancient understanding of *peristasis* relates to suffering, deification and beneficence. Concerning suffering, the catalogues run the gamut of hardships. Fitzgerald mentions *peristaseis* including poverty, shipwreck, sickness, war, the capture of a city, earthquake, famine, hunger, thirst, journeys, necessities, old age, ill repute, possession by demons, a fall, persecution, bonds, blows, violence, exile, slavery, and death.⁵⁴⁷ Concerning deification, many of the ancient hardship catalogues show a divine approbation for the sufferer. Fitzgerald says,

⁵⁴⁴ Paul's hardship lists occur in Romans (8:35-39); I Corinthians (4:9-13); II Corinthians (4:8-9, 6:4-10, 11:23-28, and 12:10); Philippians (4:11-12).

⁵⁴⁵ Cf. John T. Fitzgerald, Cracks in an Earthen Vessel: An Examination of the Catalogues of Hardships in the Corinthian Correspondence (Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988), 1ff.

⁵⁴⁶ Fitzgerald, 203.

⁵⁴⁷ Fitzgerald, 40.

“To the extent that hardships were seen as signs of the divine’s loving esteem and the divinely appointed means of achieving virtue, the sage’s triumph over adversity could be attributed to God.”⁵⁴⁸ However, Fitzgerald misses the fact that the divine approbation is ultimately a form of deification in the writings of Seneca. For Seneca, the divine manifests itself in some individuals in a remarkable way:

If you see a man who is unterrified in the midst of dangers, untouched by desires, happy in adversity, peaceful amid the storm, who looks down upon men from a higher plane, and views the gods on a footing of equality, will not a feeling of reverence for him steal over you? Will you not say, “This quality is too great and too lofty to be regarded as resembling this petty body in which it dwells? A divine power has descended upon that man.” When a soul rises superior to other souls, when it is under control, when it passes through every experience as if it were of small account, when it smiles at our fears and at our prayers, it is stirred by a force from heaven. A thing like this cannot stand upright unless it be propped by the divine.⁵⁴⁹ (*Ep. Morales* XLI. 4-5)

One’s ability to face hardship calmly, for Seneca, is proof of the deified status of the suffering individual. Such a person stands out amongst humanity with a kind of equality to the gods. Clearly, Seneca’s view of deification suggests that it is available to anyone who stoically accepts hardship and lives a life characterized by goodness and uprightness. Deification is available to the mighty and the lowly because of virtue.

Your money, however, will not place you on a level with God; for God has no property. Your bordered robe will not do this; for God is not clad in raiment; nor will your reputation . . . It is the soul, --but the soul that is

⁵⁴⁸ Fitzgerald, 205.

⁵⁴⁹ Lucius Annaeus Seneca, *Epistulae Morales*, translated by Richard M. Gummere (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953), 275.

upright, good, and great. What else could you call such a soul than a god dwelling as a guest in human body? A soul like this may descend into a Roman knight just as well as into a freedman's son or slave. For what is a Roman knight, or a freedman's son, or a slave? They are mere titles, born of ambition or of wrong. One may leap to heaven from the very slums. Only rise "and mould thyself to kinship with thy God." (*Ep. Morales* XXXI. 10-11)

Seneca thus democratizes deification and makes it available alike to the noble and the common, not just to emperors.⁵⁵⁰ Suffering serves as the hallmark of the virtuous deified soul. For Seneca, "Disaster is Virtue's opportunity" (*On Providence*, IV. 6).⁵⁵¹

Why is it that God afflicts the best men with ill health, or sorrow, or some other misfortune? For the same reason that in the army the bravest are assigned to the hazardous tasks; it is the picked soldier that a general sends to surprise the enemy by night attack, or to reconnoiter the road, or to dislodge a garrison. Not a man of these will say as he goes, "My commander has done me an ill turn," but instead, "He has paid me a compliment." In like manner, all those who are called to suffer what would make cowards and poltroons weep may say, "God has deemed us worthy instruments of his purpose to discover how much human nature can endure." (*On Providence*, IV. 8)

While the probative function of suffering stands out in the above citation, a socially beneficent function also exists in Seneca that needs consideration.

Another purpose of virtuous hardship in Seneca is that it functions as an exemplar for others. Thus, an individual's suffering serves to benefit others whom God chooses to

⁵⁵⁰ Cf. Marion Altman, "Cult in Seneca," *Classical Philology* 33, no. 2 (1938): 201 of 198-204.

⁵⁵¹ Seneca, *Moral Essays*, trans. John W. Basore (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1958), 27.

deify through suffering. A virtuous sufferer becomes “a worthy model to whom others may look for guidance in living life.”⁵⁵² Seneca’s *De Providentia* alludes to the way an individual’s suffering benefits others as a role model. The work begins with the following sentence: “You have asked me, Lucilius, why, if a Providence rules the world, it still happens that many evils befall good men.”⁵⁵³ The primary answer is that the endurance of hardships makes an individual a friend of God and like God.

Friendship, do I say? Nay, rather there is a tie of relationship and a likeness, since, in truth, a good man differs from God in the element of time only; he is God’s pupil, his imitator, and true offspring, whom his all-glorious parent, being no mild taskmaster of virtues, rears, as strict fathers do, with much severity. (On Providence, I. 5)

However, throughout *De Providentia*, the sufferer also becomes a role model: “It is only evil fortune that discovers a great exemplar (*magnum exemplum*)” (III. 4).

This much I now say, --that those things which you call hardships, which you call adversities and accursed, are, in the first place, for the good of the persons themselves to whom they come; in the second place, that they are for the good of the whole human family, for which the gods have a greater concern than for single persons. (On Providence, III. 1)

How does an individual’s suffering benefit others? Seneca hints at an answer when he recounts Regulus’ hardships. Seneca asks (On Providence, III. 9), “What injury did Fortune do to him because she made him a pattern (*documentum*) of loyalty, a pattern (*documentum*) of endurance?” Ultimately, the suffering of the virtuous individual serves as a documentable example or proof of the merits of faithfulness and patience. The

⁵⁵² Fitzgerald, 79.

⁵⁵³ Seneca, *Moral Essays*, 3.

virtuous sufferer becomes society's docent and exemplar: "Why do they suffer certain hardships? It is that they may teach (*doceant*) others to endure them; they were born to be a pattern (*exemplar*)" (On Providence, V. 1). For Seneca, the virtuous sufferer benefits society as an exemplar who teaches others that suffering does not mean divine abandonment. To suffer virtuously makes one like the gods, serves as an assurance of divine approbation for the sufferer, and benefits humanity as role model for others to follow.

Paul's hardship catalogues have many of the same ideas that are in the Greco-Roman *peristasis* catalogues. We shall see that the catalogue in Romans 8 legitimizes the relationship of the sufferer to the divine. Then we will explore how two catalogues in the Corinthian letters suggest ideas of deification and beneficence.

In Romans 8:35, Paul lists seven varieties of sufferings including "hardship," "distress," "persecution," "famine," "nakedness," "peril," and "sword" (v. 35). Scholars point out the fact that Paul uses all of these terms, except "sword," in other accounts of his own sufferings.⁵⁵⁴ The list of hardships occurs within Roman 8:31-39 where Paul is giving a peroration "that what God has already done in and through Christ has established a bond of love which cannot be broken."⁵⁵⁵ The passage consists of a series of rhetorical questions. Before the list of hardships, Paul asks, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Luz suggests that the questions in this section are "an *erotisis* (=an interrogation with animated questions) in affirmative negation, in which the questions are put in the affirmative, but answers must be supplied by the audience in the emphatic

⁵⁵⁴ Cf. Robert Jewett, Romans: A Commentary (Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2007), 544.

⁵⁵⁵ James D. G. Dunn, Word Biblical Commentary: Romans 1-8 (Dallas: Word Books, 1988), 497.

negative.”⁵⁵⁶ Paul follows the *erotisis* and hardship list with a citation from Psalm 44: “For your sake we are being killed all day long; we are accounted as sheep to be slaughtered.” The use of Psalm 44 suggests that hardships occur because of the sufferer’s identification with God. Suffering in this case is not a result of unfaithfulness to God. Jewett suggests that the use of Psalm 44 is an expression of Paul’s “Christ-mysticism.”⁵⁵⁷

Pauline Christ-mysticism has as its aim the conformity of the believer with the Lord Jesus in his passion and in his resurrection glory . . . In particular the suffering of Christians becomes an epiphany of Christ in the present. It is not just once in baptism that Christians complete the imitation of the cross of Christ in the present, but also daily: ‘For your sake are we killed all day long’ (Rom. 8.36).⁵⁵⁸

Thus, we can see that Paul, as in the case of Greco-Roman *peristasis* catalogues in general, legitimizes the sufferer by showing that suffering is not a hallmark of divine disfavor but is proof of one’s correspondence with God. Jewett similarly relates Romans 8:35 to other hardship catalogues by saying, “What all these catalogues have in common are the issues of honor, shame, and qualification, which provide the immediate background for understanding the seven forms of hardship that Paul claims cannot separate the faithful from the love of Christ.”⁵⁵⁹

In 1 Corinthians 4, Paul uses a hardship catalogue (4:9-13) to counter a group at Corinth whose concept of Christian identity goes beyond the bounds of Paul’s understanding of identification with Christ. Simply put, they have an exaggerated

⁵⁵⁶ Jewett, 533, note 7.

⁵⁵⁷ Ulrich Luz, “Paul as Mystic,” *The Holy Spirit and Christian Origins: Essays in Honor of James D. G. Dunn*, Ed. Graham N. Stanton, Bruce W. Longnecker, and Stephen C. Barton (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2004), 131-143.

⁵⁵⁸ Luz, 140.

⁵⁵⁹ Jewett, 545.

understanding of deification that excludes the possibility that God uses suffering to achieve divine ends. They believe that they have a unique relationship to God in Christ, but Paul is fearful that their exaggerated understanding of their identity robs them of an ability to perceive how God works through suffering. Paul captures the exaggerated understanding of the Corinthians in 4:8 by using three verbal forms to describe them: “You are already sated (κεκορεσμένοι), you already became rich (ἐπλουτήσατε), without us you reigned (ἐβασιλεύσατε).” The background of the Corinthians’ exaggerated self-understanding is an issue of dispute among scholars. Barrett favors an over-realized eschatology at Corinth. “The Corinthians are behaving as if the age to come were already consummated, as if the saints had already taken over the kingdom (Dan. vii. 18); for them there is no ‘not yet’ to qualify the ‘already’ of realized eschatology.”⁵⁶⁰ Collins also suggests that eschatology lies in the background to the Corinthian problem: “With their overly realized eschatology Paul contrasts his ‘eschatological reservation,’ the ‘already but not yet’ of the eschaton.”⁵⁶¹ Richard Horsley suggests that the Corinthians’ sense of elitism finds its background in Hellenistic-Jewish conceptions. He traces similarities between Philo’s writings and Paul’s portrayal of Corinthian elitism.⁵⁶² Other scholars suggest that the background to the Corinthian’s self-understanding arises from “an uncritical mixture” of Stoicism and Christianity.⁵⁶³ The background is likely a combination of an over-realized eschatology and Hellenistic-Jewish spirituality. Stoicism

⁵⁶⁰ C. K. Barrett, A Commentary on the First Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1968), 109.

⁵⁶¹ Raymond F. Collins, First Corinthians (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1999), 187.

⁵⁶² Cf. Richard A. Horsley, “Pneumatikos vs. Psychikos: Distinctions of Spiritual Status among the Corinthians,” Harvard Theological Review 69 (1976): 269-288.

⁵⁶³ Richard Hays, Interpretation: First Corinthians (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1997), 71.

is an unlikely source for the Corinthians' self-understanding because Stoicism, as we have seen in Seneca, clearly links deification and hardship.

Paul recognizes that the Corinthians have an overemphasis on deification that excludes the role of suffering for others. They have no problem seeing themselves as enriched rulers because of their identification in Christ. In the Greek text of verse 8, Paul precedes the three verbal forms that emphasize the nature of the Corinthians' self-understanding with three adverbs in the emphatic position: "Already (*ἤδη*) you are sated; already (*ἤδη*) you became rich, separately (*χωρίς*) of us you reigned." The emphatic terms get at what is problematic with the Corinthians' self-assessment. For Paul, the Corinthian self-assessment of being sated and rich is premature, and their self-assessment of reigning is too exclusive. Paul shows the problem of their premature and exclusive self-assessment when he says, "I wish you had reigned, so that we might have reigned with you" (I Cor. 4:8b). Joseph Fitzmyer describes the sentence as an "unattainable wish."⁵⁶⁴ "By it, Paul turns his three statements upside down and seeks to tell the Corinthian Christians that he refuses to consider them 'Kings.'"⁵⁶⁵ Ultimately, for Paul, the Corinthians' self-assessment is hollow because nobody benefits from it. Their deification lacks suffering and beneficence. Richard Horsley says, "By recasting the Corinthians' language of residual transcendent status (immortal spiritual existence) into his own worldview, according to which a transformed existence would not be attained until the *parousia*, Paul hopes to demonstrate how inappropriate and inflated are their

⁵⁶⁴ Joseph Fitzmyer, The Anchor Yale Bible: First Corinthians (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 218.

⁵⁶⁵ Fitzmyer, 218.

self-images.”⁵⁶⁶ Subsequently, Paul invites the Corinthians to mimic the apostolic example (4:16). Paul’s *peristasis* catalogue (4:9-13) serves as the foil to the Corinthian’s fantastic self-understanding. The catalogue itself divides into five parts: the divine purpose in apostolic suffering (v. 9), apostolic suffering contrasted with the Corinthians (v. 10), the ongoing nature of apostolic suffering (vv. 11-12a), the role of suffering in primitive Christianity in general (vv. 12b-13a), and the result of suffering for the apostles in particular (v. 13b). We will briefly consider each part of Paul’s *peristasis* catalogue.

Paul foils the Corinthian’s exaggerated self-understanding by emphasizing the divine purpose within apostolic suffering: “For I think that God displayed us apostles last of all as condemned to death because we have become a spectacle to the world, both to angels and to humans” (v. 9). While most commentators recognize that Paul is using language reminiscent of the condemned in gladiatorial displays, only a few scholars recognize the irony of Paul’s depiction of the apostles in this fashion as it relates to the Corinthians. Gaston Deluz recognizes that for Paul the apostles “seem to be of no more importance than the gladiators who shed their blood in the arena to provide an amusing public spectacle . . . surely the Corinthians should be ashamed to lounge in the best seats and just applaud or even boo.”⁵⁶⁷ Raymond Collins also notices this irony of Paul’s depiction of the apostles as entertainment for the Corinthian elite.⁵⁶⁸ The depiction of the apostles as suffering in gladiatorial combat is Paul’s way to show the Corinthian elite that they are ultimately on the wrong side. “Paul is not defending his idiosyncratic way of

⁵⁶⁶ Richard A. Horsley, *I Corinthians* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998), 70.

⁵⁶⁷ Gaston Deluz, *A Companion to I Corinthians*, (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1963), 47.

⁵⁶⁸ Raymond Collins, *Sacra Pagina: First Corinthians* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Michael Glazier, 1999), 188.

living out his own calling but presenting the way of the cross as modeled by the apostles.”⁵⁶⁹

To make sure that the Corinthians recognize that they are on the wrong side in the divine spectacle, Paul graciously contrasts apostolic suffering with the Corinthians’ experience of existence. Paul uses theatrical imagery in this instance: “We are fools for Christ, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are honored, we are dishonored” (1 Cor. 4:10). L. L. Welborn argues that Paul’s language of the fool arises from the mimic fool of the Greco-Roman stage:

For most Greek readers in the time of Paul, and especially for those who viewed the world from the perspective gained through participation in learned culture, the term *μωρία* designated the attitude and behavior of a particular social type: the lower class buffoon. The ‘foolishness’ of this social type consisted in weakness or deficiency of intellect, often coupled with physical grotesqueness. Because the concept of the laughable in the Greco-Roman world was grounded in contemplation of the ugly and defective, those who possessed these characteristics were deemed to be ‘foolish.’ As a source of amusement, these lower class types were widely represented on the stage in vulgar and realistic comedy known as the ‘mime’ (*μῦμος*). Through its use in this context, *μωρός* became ‘the common generic name for a mimic fool.’⁵⁷⁰

Welborn draws a startling theological conclusion to Paul’s use of the mimic fool:

“Because Paul believes that, in the cross of Christ, God has affirmed nothings and nobodies, he is able to embrace the role of the fool as the authentic mode of his own

⁵⁶⁹ David Garland, *I Corinthians* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 139.

⁵⁷⁰ L. L. Welborn, *Paul, the Fool of Christ: A Study of 1 Corinthians 1-4 in the Comic-Philosophic Tradition* (London: T & T Clark International, 2005), 32-33.

existence.”⁵⁷¹ Through the mimic fool, Paul is reminding the Corinthians of the social function that these suffering characters play in popular culture.

Fools in Greco-Roman culture broadly had two social roles. First, they were able severely to criticize the powerful with impunity. Welborn says, “Because the fool in the mime is grotesque, deformed, and without honor, he is able to utter irreverent thoughts about the rulers that are forbidden to ordinary citizens.”⁵⁷² Paul is doing something similar in contrasting the Corinthian’s prestige with apostolic suffering. “With Paul’s acknowledgment that he and his apostolic colleagues are regarded as ‘fools’ by the elite, Paul places himself in a tradition of cultural criticism that is informed by a ‘self-denying intelligence.’”⁵⁷³ A second, and older, social function of the fool in Greco-Roman society is apotropaic. According to Carlin Barton, “No character in all of Roman life was so carefully fashioned to attract the evil eye as the grotesque mime. They were the living amulets for an entire culture.”⁵⁷⁴ The idea of the fool as apotropaic goes back to the belief that the grotesque could avert evil. Barbara Hughes Fowler describes this idea in relation to figurines of Hellenistic culture: “The distorted bodies and faces of these figurines may have been thought to divert the evil eye because of their sheer ugliness, or because they provoke laughter, which would in itself dispel the dark powers, or because they somehow anticipated the worst that the eye could do.”⁵⁷⁵ Geoffrey Sumi’s study of

⁵⁷¹ Welborn, 250.

⁵⁷² Welborn, 149.

⁵⁷³ Welborn, 149.

⁵⁷⁴ Carlin A. Barton, The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans: The Gladiator and the Monster (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 169.

⁵⁷⁵ Barbara Hughes Fowler, The Hellenistic Aesthetic (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1989): 65.

mimic fools reveals the apotropaic role that fools played at banquets, funerals, weddings, and triumphs.⁵⁷⁶

It seems to me, however, that the main purpose of the abusive songs and language used at such events can only be explained as being apotropaic, with the ultimate purpose of keeping the honorands from rising too high. In other words, I would not suggest that at triumphs and funerals, as at carnival, there was a complete absence of hierarchical status distinctions, but rather that there was a tension that existed between the great glory that was being celebrated, on the one hand, and the fear that honoring someone in this way could lead to disaster, on the other hand.⁵⁷⁷

Thus, fools functioned within Roman society both to criticize society and to ward away evil from the elite. These two functions of the mimic fool ultimately made the fool an ambivalent character for society. “The railer who drives away evil may at the same time be made to take upon himself the accumulated evil of his people. He may be singled out as a *pharmakos*, a scapegoat, and be ceremonially beaten and exiled, if not slain.”⁵⁷⁸

Mimic fools of Greco-Roman society shed an interesting light on our ideas of suffering, deification and societal beneficence. Fools in Greco-Roman culture, whether in normal life or artistic portrayal, were often people with disabilities that became objects of cruelty. “Because the actor is already grotesque, deformed, and without honor, and because he is punished with slapsticks on the spot, he can speak the unspeakably

⁵⁷⁶ Geoffrey Sumi, “Impersonating the Dead: Mimes at Roman Funerals,” American Journal of Philology 123, no. 4 (2002): 580 of 559-585.

⁵⁷⁷ Sumi, 581.

⁵⁷⁸ Barton, 147. Barton is here quoting Robert Elliot. Cf. Robert Elliot, The Power of Satire (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), 135.

irreverent thoughts about rulers that are forbidden to normal citizens.”⁵⁷⁹ Thus, the mimic fool suffers from physical disabilities and the derision of others. However, the fool’s suffering was socially beneficent. Carlin A. Barton insightfully describes the social function as a “physics of envy:”

The monster and the mocking mimic are related to political and social behaviors within a “physics of envy.” To the extent that Rome had become a highly articulated and fragmentary culture in which hierarchy was both more elaborate and more rigid, envy hypostatized itself into the *derisor*, who was also its remedy, the negation of a negation.⁵⁸⁰

The fool could expose the ills of society in ways that were simply unavailable to the average Roman citizen. Thus, the suffering mime actually benefits society, but we must now consider if there is any association of the mimic fool with the concept of sacrality.

In the mythology of Rome, the foolish mime receives a sacral function according to several sources.

The story went that, in 211 B. C., the city praetor, Calpurnius Piso, was celebrating the newly instituted Ludi Apollinares, when it was suddenly announced that Hannibal was at the Colline Gate. The men left the theater, seized their weapons, and drove off the foe. On returning, they were troubled lest the interruption should cause a *religio*, or offense to the gods, which would require a repetition of the games. But, when it was found that an old actor, Gaius Pomponius, was still dancing to the music of the flute, all anxiety was removed. There had been no interruption of the music and the dance, and so the religious validity of the performance remained intact. Hence a proverb arose, variously quoted as *Omnia*

⁵⁷⁹ John J. Winkler, Auctor and Actor: A Narratological Reading of Apuleius’ *The Golden Ass* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1985), 287.

⁵⁸⁰ Barton, 144.

secunda: saltat senex, or *Salva res est: saltat senex*, or, if the editors of Festus have correctly restored his words, *Salva res <est dum cantat> senex*. This saying is noticed by Sinius Capito, a contemporary of Cicero, as being in current use; by Verrius Flaccus, who wrote in the first century of our era; and by Festus, who wrote in the second century of our era.⁵⁸¹

“*Salva res est; saltat senex*” became the dictum of the mimes.⁵⁸² Jory lists three inscriptions from the second century CE that indicate that mimes “also held office as priests in a *synhodus*,”⁵⁸³ which Jory believes to be a “joint cult of Dionysos and the Emperor.”⁵⁸⁴ Given the ambivalent treatment of mimes by Roman society, the priestly role of the mime is likely the province of their own semiautonomous society of mimes.⁵⁸⁵ Nevertheless, the mimes’ mythic association with the successful completion of the *Ludi Apollinares*, the motto, “*Salva res est; saltat senex*,” and the ubiquitous potential of the mime to ward away evil give a sacral function to the mimic fool. For our purposes, we might say that the Roman mimic-fool functions as a reminder that deity works through unlikely channels.

In a unique way, Paul raises the mime to a new level of sacral function by employing the mimic-funerary role. At aristocratic and imperial funerals, mimes portrayed the deceased by donning a mask crafted in the image of the deceased, dressing

⁵⁸¹ William M. Green, “The Ritual Validity of the *Ludi Scaenici*,” *The Classical Weekly* 26, no. 20 (1933): 157 of 156-157.

⁵⁸² Cf. E. J. Jory, “The Drama of the Dance: Prolegomena to an Iconography of Imperial Pantomime,” *Roman Theater and Society: E. Togo Salmon Papers*, ed. William J. Slater (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 25.

⁵⁸³ E. J. Jory, “Associations of Actors in Rome,” *Hermes* 98, np. 2 (1970): 238 of 224-253.

⁵⁸⁴ *ibid.*, 240.

⁵⁸⁵ Cf. Anne Duncan, *Performance and Identity in the Classical World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 123.

in the clothes of the dead person and imitating the departed in speech and gesture.

Polybius (c. 203-120 BCE), Diodorus Siculus (1st century BCE), and Seutonius (c. 70-130 CE) allude to this funeral custom among the Romans. We shall briefly consider the writings of each of these authors concerning this funerary custom.

Polybius is the oldest authority that we have on the subject. He describes the custom of representing the dead at funerals in the following way:

Next after the interment and the performance of usual ceremonies, they place the image (τήν εἰκόνα) of the departed in the most conspicuous position in the house, enclosed in a wooden shrine. This image (εἰκών) is a mask (πρόσωπον) reproducing with remarkable fidelity both the features and complexion of the deceased . . . and when any distinguished member of the family dies they take them to the funeral, putting them on men who seem to them to bear the closest resemblance to the original in stature and carriage. These representatives wear togas, with a purple border if the deceased was a consul or praetor, whole purple if he was a censor, and embroidered with gold if he had celebrated a triumph or achieved anything similar. They all ride in chariots preceded by fasces, axes, and other insignia by which the different magistrates are wont to be accompanied according to the respective dignity of the offices of state held by each during his life; and when they arrive at the rostra, they all seat themselves in a row on ivory chairs. (Histories, VI. 53. 1-8)⁵⁸⁶

However, Polybius' account is unspecific about who actually portrays the deceased.

Diodorus of Sicily is the first to mention that mimes fill the role of imitating the deceased at funerals:

⁵⁸⁶ Polybius, *The Histories*, trans. by W. R. Paton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1954 reprint).

Those Romans who by reason of noble birth and fame of their ancestors are pre-eminent are, when they die, portrayed in figures that are not only lifelike as to features but show the whole bodily appearance. For they employ actors (μμητάς) who through a man's whole life have carefully observed his carriage and the several peculiarities of his appearance. In like fashion each of the dead man's ancestors takes his place in the funeral procession, with such robes and insignia as enable the spectators to distinguish from the portrayal how far each had advanced in the *curses honorum* and had a part in the dignities of the state. (Library, XXXI. 25. 2)⁵⁸⁷

A final instance of a mime playing a funerary role occurs in Suetonius' humorous characterization of Emperor Vespasian's covetousness.

Even at his funeral, Favor, a leading actor of the mimes, who wore his mask and, according to the usual custom, imitated the actions and words of the deceased during his lifetime, having asked the procurators in a loud voice how much his funeral procession would cost, and hearing the reply "Ten million sesterces," cried out: "Give me a hundred thousand and fling me even into the Tiber." (*Vesp.* 19. 2)⁵⁸⁸

All three of the above texts agree that people portrayed prominent individuals at their funerals. The texts by Polybius and Diodorus have mimes portraying the dead. Both Polybius and Diodorus emphasize that the mimes' portrayals reveal the relative honor of the deceased and their contribution to the public good. Polybius, however, follows the

⁵⁸⁷ Diodorus Siculus, *The Library of History*, trans. by F. R. Walton (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).

⁵⁸⁸ Suetonius, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars*, trans. by J. C. Rolfe (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1950 Reprint).

description of portraying the dead with an explanation of the impact of the practice upon the mourners:

There could not easily be a more ennobling spectacle (θέαμα) for a young man who aspires to fame and virtue. For who would not be inspired by the sight of the images (εἰκόνας) of men renowned for their excellence, all together and as if alive and breathing? What spectacle (θέαμα) could be more glorious than this? . . . By this means, by this constant renewal of the good report of brave men, the celebrity of those who performed noble deeds is rendered immortal, while at the same time the fame of those who did good service to their country becomes known to the people and a heritage for future generations. But the most important result is that young men are thus inspired to endure every suffering for the public welfare in hope of winning the glory that attends on brave men. (VI. 53.9 – 54.3)

Thus, according to Polybius, the reason for portraying the dead at Roman funerals is to inspire others to act virtuously and bravely in hardship for the common good. The spectacle (θέαμα) of portraying the dead summons the living to emulate the qualities of the deceased and to endure suffering for the benefit of the public welfare.

Paul similarly describes the apostles as spectacles (θεατρον, 1 Cor. 4:9) and mimic-fools for Christ with the intent of inspiring the Corinthians to emulate Christ in suffering for the benefit of others. Paul emulates the earthly suffering Christ, not the risen glorious Christ, to remind the Corinthians that enduring suffering like Christ for the benefit of others precedes glorification. While the Corinthians want to reign with Christ, Paul reminds them that they must suffer like Christ.

Reading I Corinthians 4 in light of the funerary role of mimic actors casts light on the peristasis catalogue that follows. After appealing to the mimic role of the apostles as

fools for the sake of Christ, Paul lists the kinds of suffering that apostles regularly endure in verses 11 and 12a: “To the present hour we are hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clothed and beaten and homeless, and we grow weary from the work of our hands.” He follows this list with an appeal to the primitive nature of Christian suffering, rooted in the teaching of Christ: “When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure; when slandered, we speak kindly” (verses 12b-13a). John Piper suggests that the response to bless when reviled “reflects the catechetical teaching common among the churches.”⁵⁸⁹ The flow of these verses suggests that the apostles are genuinely playing their parts of showing the life of Christ through their own lives. While their sufferings are different in kind from the actual sufferings of Jesus, they are the same in their capacity to work for the good. The apostles’ endurance of hardship is for the sake of others.

Our consideration of two of Paul’s peristasis catalogues reveals that Paul viewed suffering as a sign of divine approbation and identification with Christ. Is their evidence that Paul was able to translate this understanding into his own experience of physical illness? We want briefly to explore two texts that suggest that Paul uses his understanding of apostolic hardship in relation to his own physical illness. The passages are 2 Corinthians 12:1-10, which contains a peristasis catalogue, and Galatians 4:12-20, which gives an instance of peristasis without employing an actual catalogue.

2 Corinthians 12:1-10 is part of a section of the epistle (chapters 10-13) where Paul defends his apostleship against those who are asserting their own authority by calling Paul’s authority into question. The tone of this section of the epistle stands in

⁵⁸⁹ John Piper, “Love Your Enemies”: Jesus’ Love Command in the Synoptic Gospels and in the Early Christian Paraenesis (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 16.

marked contrast to the preceding chapters. Chapters 1-9 are thankful and irenic in tone, but chapters 10-13 are defensive and fierce. This tonal change has led scholars to speculate on the composite nature of the epistle and the possibility that it contains fragments of several letters.⁵⁹⁰ In 12:1-10, Paul asserts his apostleship by recounting his own visions and revelations. However, Paul's assertion of his own spirituality via visions and revelations ironically reveals the role of suffering in the apostle's life. Paul meets his opponents tit for tat in their boasting but adds one unique quality that they lack, a capacity to experience Christ's power in weakness. We can divide the passage into two sections focusing on Paul's boast of visions and revelations (vv. 1-5), and Paul's boast of weakness (vv. 6-10).

In the first section dealing with boasting about visions and revelations, Paul purposefully distances himself from the experience to show the appropriate attitude toward divine revelation. Revelations occur by God's graciousness. They do not occur because people make them happen. Thus, Paul begins the passage by saying, "It is necessary to boast, nothing is expedient (οὐ συμφέρον) in it, yet I will come to visions and revelations of the lord." Paul fleshes out his insistence that nothing is expedient in boasting about revelations in the next verses where he uses passive verbs to describe the experience of the revelation. The person in Christ (ἀνθρωπον εἰς Χριστῶ) who experiences this revelation is passively caught-up in the experience. Two passive verbal forms of ἀρπάζω (to snatch or catch) occur in the passage. The first occurs in the second verse (aorist passive participle), and the second form of ἀρπάζω occurs in the fourth verse (aorist passive indicative). Thus, the person undergoing divine revelation is passively

⁵⁹⁰ Cf. James L. Price, The New Testament: Its History and Theology (New York: Macmillan Publishing Company, 1987), 324.

seized, caught-up, or snatched in the encounter. The only active verb employed on the part of the recipient of revelation is the verb “to hear” (ἠκκουσεν), which is itself a rather passive activity. To further the idea that the revelation is something that occurs to the recipient, Paul describes the experience in the third person, “I knew a person in Christ . . . who was caught up into the third heaven,” and emphasizes his own ignorance of the mechanics of the experience whether the person was in the body or out of the body. Paul is trying to show that visions and revelations, even those involving the third heaven and paradise, are not something to boast about because revelation is itself a passive experience. God acts to reveal; humans receive. In Paul’s case, the vision and revelation are enigmatic concerning “unutterable words (ἄρρητα ῥήματα) which a person is not to speak” (v. 4). “The enigmatic nature of ascent here is confirmed by these two words, Paul ascended he is not sure how, to a level of heaven which he does not describe, to receive words which he cannot speak.”⁵⁹¹ Thus, Paul is showing the Corinthians to whom he writes that boasting about revelations is a rather hollow activity. Revelatory experiences say nothing about the recipient but everything about the graciousness of God who is the revealer. Paul makes this idea explicit in verse 5: “Concerning this person I will boast, but concerning myself I will not boast except in weakness.” Paul contrasts himself and “this person” (τοῦ τοιούτου) to refer back to the second verse where the person who had such a revelatory experience was a “person in Christ” (ἄνθρωπον ἐν Χριστῷ). Frank Matera says,

The detached manner in which he described that ecstatic experience, however, now allows him to make this distinction. Accordingly, he can

⁵⁹¹ Paula R. Gooder, Only the Third Heaven? 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 and Heavenly Ascent (London: T&T Clark, 2006), 188.

boast in the man in Christ who was transported to the third heaven, because this ecstatic experience was not his own doing. The visions and revelations came from Christ, who presumably transported him to paradise. Boasting in this man is boasting in the Lord.⁵⁹²

For our purposes, we can say that Paul's boasting about this person in Christ shows that deification for Paul is ἐν Χριστῷ. The way that he detaches himself from the revelation, employs passive verbs, and enigmatically alludes to the content of the revelation gives preeminence to identification with Christ. Besides ultimately boasting in Christ, Paul is only willing to boast in his weakness (ἀσθένεια).

The second section of the passage (10:6-10) now focuses on Paul's boasting in his weakness. Paul refrains from boasting about revelations because he would rather have the focus on what a person sees (βλέπει) or hears (ἀκούει) from him. Personal revelations are private, but one's actions and words are public. For Paul, what is ultimately public and observable is his endurance amidst physical weakness. Thus, in verses 7, Paul links his experience of revelation with a hardship: "And by the extraordinary revelations, therefore, in order that I might not exalt myself, a thorn in the flesh was given to me, a messenger of Satan, in order to pummel me, that I might not exalt myself." The text is difficult to translate and has several textual variants.⁵⁹³ The history of scholarship has given three basic interpretations to Paul's thorn in the flesh (σκόλοψ τῆ σαρκί).⁵⁹⁴ Interpretations of the thorn include physical maladies,

⁵⁹² Frank J. Matera, II Corinthians: A Commentary (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003), 281.

⁵⁹³ Cf. C. K. Barrett, The Second Epistle to the Corinthians (New York: Harper & Row, 1973), 313.

⁵⁹⁴ Cf. Matera, 283.

persecution and sinful inclination. The idea that the thorn is a sinful inclination arises from the Latin version that has *stimulus carnis*. However, given the fact that a person's sinful inclinations are a private affair, the sinful inclination interpretation does not fit the context of the passage as treating what is public. The persecution interpretation falters on the textual basis that Paul mentions the ἄγγελος Σατανᾶ in the singular, but Paul's experience of persecution was ongoing with varying instigators.⁵⁹⁵ While it is possible to see a single persecutor as an ἄγγελος Σατανᾶ, Paul's ongoing experience of persecutions calls for ἄγγελοι Σατανᾶ to coincide with the variety of persecutions. The interpretation that Paul's thorn is a physical malady avoids this difficulty because an illness can be ongoing (even if intermittent), public, and understood (as in the case of Job) as arising from a satanic origin. A further objection to the persecution interpretation is that Paul's prayer in the following verse (v. 8) reflects a typical healing testimony associated with Asclepius. A rather close parallel is a testimony of an individual with multiple complaints of pains, headaches and throat problems.⁵⁹⁶ The significant line of the testimony says, "-- since about that too I had consulted the god --" (καὶ γὰρ περὶ τούτου παρεκάλεσα τὸν θεόν).⁵⁹⁷ Paul's testimony uses the preposition ὑπὲρ and replaces τὸν θεόν with τὸν κύριον. Most scholars agree that Paul is addressing Christ by his use of "the lord." If Paul is using the style of Hellenistic healing testimonies, the fact that he reports a negative answer (verse 9a) is significant. "And he said to me, 'My

⁵⁹⁵ Cf. Margaret E. Thrall, A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Second Epistle to the Corinthians: Volume II (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 2000), 813.

⁵⁹⁶ Cf. Emma J. Edelstein and Ludwig Edelstein, Asclepius: Collection and Interpretations of the Testimonies (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1998), 248-247.

⁵⁹⁷ Edelstein, 248-249.

grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.”” The use of the term weakness does not fit with the idea of persecution but fits the idea of a physical malady well. The answer that Paul receives shifts his focus from petitioning for well-being to boasting of peristasis for the sake of Christ (verses 9b-10).

Very gladly, I will boast in my weakness, so that the power of Christ might rest upon me. Therefore, I am content in weaknesses, insults, calamities, persecutions and narrow straits, on behalf of Christ. For when I am weak, then I am strong.

Udo Schnelle observes, “In 2 Cor. 12:10, Paul can evaluate the peristasis positively, for endurance in difficult circumstances points to the power of Christ at work in the apostle.”⁵⁹⁸ Thus, we find here as in Paul’s boast about revelations that Paul is ultimately boasting about Christ. If deification for Paul is ἐν Χριστῷ, the role of suffering is ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. The context in which Paul makes this claim is public (what can be seen in him or heard from him) and shows that Paul sees his role of enduring hardship for Christ as beneficial for others.

We can see in 2 Corinthians 12:1-10 that all the elements of our redemptive nexus are present. Paul suffers illness, and it becomes the occasion for speculation about his apostolic authority. However, Paul defends his authority by asserting tit-for-tat that his credentials can match anyone boasting superiority over the apostle. Paul’s authority ultimately lies in the grace of God in Christ. While asserting his own experience of revelation, Paul is ultimately boasting of the gracious God who reveals himself in Christ. The revelation that Paul describes is a case of ascension to the presence of God, a classic

⁵⁹⁸ Udo Schnelle, The Apostle Paul: His Life and Theology, trans. by M. Eugene Boring (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2009), 78.

instance of deification. However, Paul plays down the nature of deification because he understands the experience as an act of the grace of God in Christ. Deification for Paul is ἐν Χριστῷ. If one is to boast, one must ultimately boast of Christ. Paul understands his ascension vis-à-vis his identification with Christ. As to Paul's illness, he explains that he received it as a result of his ascension. We thus find that Paul is employing a different order to the redemptive nexus under consideration. For Hinton and in contrast to Paul, deification occurs by recognizing that one's suffering can benefit others. In Paul, deification is ἐν Χριστῷ and suffering comes as a result of the deification, in this instance, to prevent one from thinking too highly of one's self. Since deification is ἐν Χριστῷ, suffering is ὑπὲρ Χριστοῦ. The beneficence of suffering in Paul is ultimately that it publically allows others to see Christ in him.

Another instance of Paul using the concept of peristasis in relation to his own health occurs in Galatians 4:12-20. The letter to the Galatians is Paul's response to news that some 'troublemakers' or 'agitators' were advising the Galatians of the necessity of circumcision (5:2-12 and 6:12-13) and questioning Paul's apostolic authority. Thus, the letter aims to defend Paul's understanding of the gospel, his apostolic authority and the necessity of Christian liberty. Galatians 4:12-20 is Paul's personal appeal to the Galatians to remain loyal to him and the gospel as he first preached it to them. Betz suggests that the passage is ultimately an argument based on the idea of friendship and cites Cicero: "For friendship is nothing else than an accord in all things, human and divine, conjoined with mutual goodwill and affection."⁵⁹⁹ While Betz is certainly correct

⁵⁹⁹ Hans Dieter Betz, Galatians: A Commentary on Paul's Letter to the Churches in Galatia (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1979), 221f.

that Paul is appealing to the idea of friendship, I would add that Paul is ultimately appealing to friendship forged through hospitality, which carries even greater significance in terms of the Galatians' obligations to remain loyal to Paul and his gospel. The argument of the passage alludes to Paul's initial reception by the Galatians as a guest and the loyalty established through such a relationship. In order to situate the cultural significance of Paul's argument, we shall briefly consider the religious motivation and nature of friendships forged through hospitality in the Hellenistic world before considering how this passage fits our redemptive nexus of suffering, beneficence and deification.

Reminiscent of Abraham and Lot welcoming divine visitors unawares, the notion that the gods traveled incognito to test the hospitality of individuals was widespread in the Hellenistic world.⁶⁰⁰ Hospitality finds its religious motivation in the possibility that the host might ultimately entertain heavenly visitors (cf. Hebrews 13:2). For the Hellenistic world, one should show hospitality to a stranger because "Zeus is the avenger of suppliants and strangers – Zues, the strangers' god – who walks in the footsteps of reverend strangers" (Homer, Odyssey 9. 270).⁶⁰¹ The gods go in the guise of strangers to test human hospitality (Odyssey 17.485-487). To ignore a stranger in need is to risk the opportunity to entertain the gods. Ovid (Metamorphoses, VIII. 620ff.) recounts a story of an elderly couple, Baucis and Philemon, who entertains Jupiter and Mercury unawares:

⁶⁰⁰ Plato (Republic, III. 381d) objects to the idea of theoxeny on the grounds that such epiphanies would require the gods to appear as less than perfect and participate in deception. However, Plato's objection itself alludes to how common the motif was among the poets. Cf. Plato, Republic, trans. Paul Shorey (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1946), 193.

⁶⁰¹ Homer, The Odyssey, trans. by A. T. Murray (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995).

“To a thousand homes they came, seeking a place for rest; a thousand homes were barred against them. Still one house received them, humble indeed, thatched with straw and reeds from the marsh.”⁶⁰² Similar to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah, with the heavenly visitors’ identity revealed, the gods spare Baucis and Philemon from destruction for their kindness but punish those who failed to receive them with a flood. Three motifs are at work in stories of theoxeny. They include “deity in disguise, recognition by a mortal (or failure therein), and reward (or punishment).”⁶⁰³ Thus, the religious motivation of welcoming strangers in Greco-Roman times involved a deep religious belief that to ignore a stranger was to court disaster at the hands of the gods.

In the Hellenistic world, welcoming a stranger forms a friendship between the guest and host that carries significant obligations. Homer’s account of the encounter of Glaucus and Diomedes in battle reveals both a concern for theoxeny and the obligations of the guest-host relationship (cf. *Iliad*, VI. 120ff). Diomedes inquires of Glaucus, “Who are you, mighty one, among mortal men? . . . if you are one of the immortals come down from heaven, I will not fight with the heavenly gods” (*Iliad*, VI. 123 and 126). Glaucus in response to Diomedes’ question assures him that his lineage is mortal and recounts his ancestry through Bellerophon. Diomedes responds to Glaucus’ ancestry:

Well then, you are a friend of my father’s house of long standing: for noble Oeneus once entertained incomparable Bellerophon in his halls, and kept him twenty days; and moreover they gave one another fair gifts of friendship . . . Therefore now I am a dear guest-friend to you in the center of Argos, and you to me in Lycia, whenever I come to the land of that

⁶⁰² Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. Frank Justus Miller (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966 Reprint).

⁶⁰³ Cf. John F. Garcia, “Symbolic Action in the Homeric Hymns: The Theme of Recognition,” *Classical Antiquity* 21, no. 1 (2002): 14 of 5-39.

people. So let us shun one another's spears even among the throng . . .
And let us make an exchange of armor with each other, so that these men
too may know that we declare ourselves to be friends from our fathers'
days. (Iliad, VI. 212 – 231)

Walter Donlan argues that the exchanging of gifts raises the formal bond of the
relationship:

It is important at this point to distinguish between simple hospitality
(ξείνια) to a stranger, and the formal bond of guest friendship. Custom,
reinforced by divine sanction, demanded that any stranger (ξείνους) who
appeared at the door be given protection and sustenance. The giving of
obligatory or altruistic hospitality does not automatically establish a
continuing ξείνους-relationship. For that to occur, it is necessary that both
men agree to a relationship, declare it formally, and symbolically cement
it by an exchange of gifts on the spot.⁶⁰⁴

The exchange between Glaucus and Diomedes shows “that the institution of *xenia*-
friendship transcends even political loyalties.”⁶⁰⁵

Greek history and poetry records the havoc of betraying the *xenia* relationship.⁶⁰⁶

The Trojan War is due to Paris' betrayal of Menelaus at the abduction of Helen.

Offending against *xenia* is so bad that Hesiod characterizes it amongst the most heinous
offenses:

It is the same if someone does evil to a suppliant or to a guest (ξείνον), or
if he goes up to his own brother's bed, sleeping with his sister-in-law in

⁶⁰⁴ Walter Donlan, “The Unequal Exchange between Glaucus and Diomedes in Light of the Homeric Gift-Economy,” Phoenix 43, no. 1 (1989): 7 of 1-15.

⁶⁰⁵ Steve Reece, The Stranger's Welcome: Oral theory and the Aesthetics of the Homeric hospitality Scene (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1993), 55.

⁶⁰⁶ Cf. Eliabeth Belfiore, Murder among Friends: Violation of Philia in Greek Tragedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 147ff.

secret, acting wrongly, or if in folly he sins against orphaned children, or if he rebukes his aged father upon the threshold of old age, attacking him with grievous words: against such a man, Zeus himself is enraged, and in the end he imposes a grievous return for unjust (ἀδίκων) works (Works and Days, 327-334).⁶⁰⁷

Such atrocities, including offenses against the guest-host relationship, are signs for Hesiod of the evil times in which he lives. The abandonment of like-mindedness (ὁμοίους) between guest and host ranks with family betrayal (Works and Days, 182).

Paul clearly casts his appeal to the Galatians (4: 12-20) in the light of the religious motivation for hospitality and the formal obligations of a continuing ξείνος-relationship. The passage begins with the appeal: “Become as I am, because I also am as you are.” Most commentaries view this as Paul’s way of telling the Galatians to remain free of the yoke of the law. Thus, the causal explanation (“because I also am as you are”) concerns the idea that Paul’s conversion to Christ and the gospel makes him like a gentile in his new opposition to the legal observance of his former life as a Pharisee.⁶⁰⁸ While admitting the idea of Paul’s abandonment of Jewish legalism, Betz also suggests that the appeal portrays ideas of the ξείνος-relationship that emphasizes equality, unanimity and likeness.⁶⁰⁹ From this appeal for mutuality, Paul next states, “You did me no wrong (οὐδέν με ἠδικήσατε).” Paul’s use of the language of injustice is an assurance that to this point the Galatians have not acted in an unjust (ἀδίκων) way which would be worthy of God’s notice.

⁶⁰⁷ Hesiod, *Theogony, Works and Days, Testimonia*, trans. by Glenn W. Most (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006).

⁶⁰⁸ Cf. Charles B. Cousar, *Galatians: Interpretation, A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching* (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982), 99f.

⁶⁰⁹ Betz, 224.

To assure that the Galatians recognize that Paul is addressing their *xenia* relationship, he recounts their initial encounter: “You know it was because of a bodily ailment that I preached the gospel to you at first; and though my condition was a trial to you, you did not scorn or despise me, but received me as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus” (Gal. 4:13-14). We can see in this text several elements relating to the religious motivation behind welcoming guests in the Hellenistic world. Paul comes as a stranger in need because of a physical ailment (ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκός). Paul describes his coming in sickness as a test or temptation (τὸν πειρασμὸν) for the Galatians. We have already seen how the welcome of strangers is a trial or test that the gods employ while disguised (cf. *Odyssey* 17: 485-487). This is an idea common to theoxeny. Finally, Paul says that the Galatians welcomed him “as an angel of God, as Christ Jesus.” Stutzman’s insistence that we read ὡς ἄγγελον θεοῦ and ὡς Χριστὸν Ἰησοῦν as “comparisons and not identifications” misses the religious motivation in theoxeny.⁶¹⁰ The point that Paul makes is that the Galatians received him as a divine stranger. Furthermore, Paul’s view of the significance of the Galatians’ welcoming him “as angel of God, as Christ Jesus” is open to debate. While minimalist approaches view the passage metaphorically, the possibility yet exists that Paul’s expression is part of his Christ mysticism and his understanding of his identity in Christ. Susan Garrett discussing the Christology of the passage says,

Commentators usually assume that Paul means his statement hypothetically: “You welcomed me as you would have welcomed an angel of God – indeed, as warmly as you would have welcomed Christ Jesus

⁶¹⁰ Cf. Robert Stutzman, *An Exegetical Summary of Galatians* (Dallas: SIL International, 2006).

himself.” But there is good reason to suspect that Paul is claiming that the Galatians received him “as God’s angel – namely, Jesus Christ.” In other words, Paul is making the startling claim that when he first preached the Gospel to the Galatians, he was united with Jesus Christ (see Gal. 2:20), whom Paul identifies with God’s chief angel.⁶¹¹

Luke Timothy Johnson similarly says, “When the Galatians received him ‘as Christ Jesus,’ they recognized an intimate, even mystical, identity between the Messiah and his emissary.”⁶¹² Paul is thus using theoxeny with a view to his understanding of his own identity in Christ.

The significance of receiving Paul as a divine stranger is that their hospitality ultimately allows them to encounter God through Paul. This fact of encountering God through Paul is what makes Paul’s question about their “blessedness” (ὁ μακαρισμός) so poignant: “What then has become of your blessedness?” (v.15). Reducing the language of *makarismos* to a secular idea of happiness misses the point. The Galatians’ hospitality to Paul allowed them the opportunity to encounter God through Paul. Hauck says, “The noun μακαρισμός is found only 3 times, at Gal. 4:15 for blessedness of receiving the message of salvation, and at Rom. 4:6, 9 with reference to the remission of sins. In both passages it is used almost technically by Paul.”⁶¹³ Paul is referring to the state of blessing that the Galatians felt at receiving the gospel because of his visit as a stranger.

⁶¹¹ Susan R. Garrett, No Ordinary Angel: Celestial Spirits and Christian Claims about Jesus (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008), 11.

⁶¹² Luke Timothy Johnson, The Writings of the New Testament: An Interpretation (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 1999), 328.

⁶¹³ F. Hauck, “Makarios,” Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, ed. Gerhard Kittel, trans. by Geoffrey Bromily (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1967), IV, 367.

Within the formation of a *xenia* friendship, the exchanging of gifts betokens the relationship. According to Lynette Mitchell, the gifts were not always material: “Gifts could also take the forms of favors (*charites*). *Charis* was a word whose meaning could range from simple ‘joy’ or ‘pleasure’ and ‘gratification’ to ‘favor,’ but always implied a return.”⁶¹⁴ What is significant in the exchange of gifts betokening the relationship is that the gift and the counter gift are commensurate because of the egalitarian nature of the relationship.⁶¹⁵ After Paul refers to their state of blessedness at receiving the gospel through his visit, he immediately cites the Galatians counter-gift: “For I testify that, had it been possible, you would have torn out your eyes and given (ἐδῶκατέ) them to me” (Gal. 4:15b). Both gift (the blessing of the Gospel) and counter-gift (the willingness to give their own eyes) are intangible, but they are Paul’s way of emphasizing that they are in a relationship of equality, likeness, and unanimity.

In light of their egalitarian relationship, Paul now shifts his focus to the problem of those who would place the Galatians under the yoke of the law. As a true friend, he broaches the issue through a rhetorical question (v. 16): “So then, have I become your enemy telling the truth to you?” Betz believes the question reflects the friendship topos and insists, “Among true friends it is possible to speak the truth with frankness without becoming enemies.”⁶¹⁶ Those who would place the Galatians under the yoke of the law are not like Paul. They want to establish a relationship of inequality. Thus, Paul insists, “They are zealous for you, not in a good way, but they desire to exclude you in order that

⁶¹⁴ Lynette Gail Mitchell, Greek Bearing Gifts: The Public Use of Private Relationships in the Greek World (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 18.

⁶¹⁵ Gabriel Herman, Ritualized Friendship and the Greek City (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 60f.

⁶¹⁶ Betz, 228.

you might be zealous for them.” The actions of those who are zealous (ζηλοῦσιν) for the Galatians are not good (οὐ καλῶς). Their stratagem is exclusionary. The verb ἐκκλείω means to shut out or exclude. Susan Grove Eastman says that “the missionaries’ gate-keeping requirement of circumcision, through which they exclude the uncircumcised Gentile believers from fellowship with them, is intended to create intensified zeal and yearning for acceptance into full covenant membership.”⁶¹⁷ Eastman believes this missionary stratagem is “unidirectional, coercive, and conformist.”⁶¹⁸ In short, their actions are nothing like Paul’s relationship with the Galatians.

To understand the full difference between Paul and the agitators who want to shut out the Galatians, I think the insights of Michele Murray are helpful. She argues that the Judaizers at Galatia were in fact Gentile Christians, not Jews.⁶¹⁹ Thus, they were Gentiles “living like Jews and adhering to certain Jewish practices and dangerously blurring the boundaries between Christianity and Judaism.”⁶²⁰ While Murray’s study looks at this phenomenon throughout the First and Second Centuries CE, we can summarize her evidence for this phenomenon among the Galatians to whom Paul writes in four points.

First, Paul introduces the issue in terms of the gospel, which suggests an intra-Christian dispute. The agitators are teaching a “different gospel” (Gal. 1:16) in an effort

⁶¹⁷ Susan Grove Eastman, Recovering Paul’s Mother Tongue: Language and Theology in Galatians (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2007), 55.

⁶¹⁸ Eastman, 56.

⁶¹⁹ Michelle Murray, Playing a Jewish Game: Gentile Christian Judaizing in the First and Second Centuries CE (Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2004), 36.

⁶²⁰ Murray, 2.

“to pervert the gospel of Christ” (Gal. 1:17).⁶²¹ Second, in Paul’s handwritten postscript, the preferred textual reading of Galatians 6:13 is οἱ περιτεμνόμενοι. This is a present passive participle that means “the ones being circumcised,” instead of the usual translation of “the circumcision.” While some texts have the perfect passive οἱ περιτετμημένοι (the ones who had been circumcised), the stronger textual variant is the present passive participle.⁶²² Thus, the agitators are Christian Gentiles who are undergoing circumcision and encouraging others to do the same. Third, recognizing that the agitators are Christian Gentiles undergoing circumcision explains why Paul says, “It is those who want to make a good showing in the flesh that try to compel you to be circumcised – only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.” Persecution for the cross is “a term most logically understood as a reference to Christian teachings and lifestyle.”⁶²³ Fourth, Paul’s wish that the agitators emasculate themselves (Galatians 5:12) makes more sense “if applied to Gentiles who are voluntarily undergoing circumcision as adults.”⁶²⁴ Thus, the troublemakers at Galatia are not Jews. They are Gentile Christians who are acting as Jews.

We are now able to understand why Paul is stressing his mutuality, sameness and likeness in relation to the Galatians. The difference between Paul and the agitators is that Paul, as a stranger, came to the Galatians and became a *xenia* friend. The agitators as fellow Gentile Christians are becoming strangers and using this difference as a stratagem

⁶²¹ Cf. Murray, 34.

⁶²² Cf. Murray, 35.

⁶²³ Murray, 36.

⁶²⁴ Murray, 36.

to force the Galatians to become like them. In contrast to such a stratagem, Paul reminds the Galatians that zealotry for good is always good

How does this relate to our theological nexus of suffering, deification, and beneficence and Paul's understanding of *peristasis*? Paul came to the Galatians in sickness. His sickness became an *entrée* into a *xenia* relationship with the Galatians. Some authors believe Paul's ailment had something to do with his eyes because of the reference to the Galatians willingness to pluck out their eyes for Paul. The actual kind of illness is irretrievable, but the fact remains that Paul's illness became the occasion by which he entered into a relationship with the Galatians. The phrase δι' ἀσθένειαν τῆς σαρκὸς εὐηγγελισάμην ὑμῖν suggests the occasion for Paul's preaching to the Galatians because διά with an accusative noun is causal.⁶²⁵ We could translate the expression as "because of an infirmity of the flesh, I preached the gospel to you." Paul's claim that sickness is the cause of his preaching resembles the stoic philosophy of Seneca. Far from letting sickness hamper the contemplation and communication of truth, illness becomes an opportunity to know, display, and proclaim the truth.

"But," you object, "my illness does not allow me to be doing anything; it has withdrawn me from all my duties." It is your body that is hampered by ill-health, and not your soul as well. It is for this reason that it clogs the feet of the runner and will hinder the handiwork of the cobbler or the artisan; but if your soul be habitually in practice, you will plead and teach, listen and learn, investigate and meditate. What more is necessary? Do you think that you are doing nothing if you possess self-control in your illness? You will be showing that a disease can be overcome, or at any rate endured. There is, I assure you, a place for virtue even upon a bed of sickness . . . You have something to do: wrestle bravely with disease. If it

⁶²⁵ Eastman, 100.

shall compel you to nothing, beguile you to nothing, it is a notable example that you display. O what ample matter were there for renown, if we could have spectators of our sickness.⁶²⁶ (Epistulae Morales 78. 20-21)

Like Seneca, Paul views illness as an occasion to teach concerning the truth. Of course, truth for Paul is identity with Christ. While the text contains issues of theoxeny and *xenia* friendship, weakness is the vehicle through which Paul reveals Christ with whom he identifies. The Galatians came to know Jesus Christ through Paul's illness. Just as Jesus reveals God through suffering, Paul reveals Christ through hardship.

Both the Gospel of Mark and Paul connect suffering to one's discipleship of Christ. In this way, one's identification in Christ precedes an individual's experience of suffering. This raises a problem. One's identity in Christ preceding suffering shows a weakness in Hinton's basic theological nexus. For Hinton, the nexus of suffering, beneficence and deification is unidirectional; suffering embraced as sacrifice establishes deification. In the Christian tradition with its strong Christomorphic understanding of the identity of the believer, deification precedes suffering. For both Mark and Paul, one's suffering comes out of identification. The disciples in Mark take up their crosses in identification with Christ. Their kinship as his brothers, sisters and mothers lead to suffering. In Paul, suffering occurs because one is willing to be a fool for Christ or a theoxony of Christ. Suffering might set the stage for Paul's theoxeny but his identification with Christ precedes the suffering.

⁶²⁶ Seneca, Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales, Trans. by Richard Gummere (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1962), 195.

Conclusion

Our journey through the biblical tradition reveals several areas where Hinton's nexus is underdeveloped. While our examination shows that the biblical tradition interweaves suffering, beneficence and deification, we also see that the biblical tradition adds elements that Hinton's treatment misses. Society benefits in Hinton from the suffering of individuals, but the monarchical theology suggests that society also has an obligation to those who suffer. An appreciation of the royal theology of the Hebrew bible helps us to recognize something about suffering that Hinton missed in his theological nexus. Suffering and wellbeing are ultimately social issues that require social, not simply personal, solutions. The rich illustrations of the serendipitous nature of suffering in the Hebrew bible flesh out what in Hinton is simply an argument. In light of the serendipitous nature of suffering in the Hebrew tradition, we examined participants in medical trials and the advancement of medicine as possible instances of Hinton's theological nexus. Finally, our exploration of Mark and the writings of Paul suggest that Hinton is too unidirectional in his understanding of the nexus of suffering, beneficence and deification. The New Testament places identification with Christ preeminently ahead of the suffering of the individual. Suffering arises in both Mark and Paul because of one's identification with Christ.

While our exploration in this chapter shows the basic relevance of Hinton's nexus of suffering, beneficence and deification in relation to the Jewish and Christian traditions, we shall explore in the next chapter the relevance of Hinton's thinking about pain for his contemporary setting in light of the philosophical, theological, and scientific developments through the nineteenth century. We shall explore how Hinton's

metaphysical speculations are a bridge of the Jewish and Christian traditions to Darwin's theory of evolution. Darwin was unable to connect Christianity to his thinking about natural selection because of his acceptance of ideas within natural theology. Hinton's metaphysical conceptualization allows him to reject natural theology while embracing the Darwinian revolution from a Christian perspective.

CHAPTER THREE

HINTON'S METAPHYSICAL WORLD VIEW

Hinton's metaphysical conceptualization of reality plays a large role in his theological appropriation of pain. In this chapter, we shall briefly outline Hinton's metaphysical position and method, explore the antecedents that contribute to his position, and explore the usefulness of Hinton's understanding for considering the rift that Darwin's idea of natural selection supposedly brought to religion and science. We shall see that while Hinton starts with the epistemology of Kant and Hegel to develop his metaphysics, he ultimately ends with an altruistic ethic that counters the societal ills arising from natural theology and vitalism. Hinton embraces Darwin's ideas of struggle in natural selection as a way to go beyond natural theology's emphasis on God's beneficence in nature.

I. Hinton's Metaphysical Position and Method

In The Mystery of Pain, Hinton's basic theological argument anticipates Simone Weil's insistence that "the extreme greatness of Christianity lies in the fact that it does not seek a supernatural remedy for suffering, but a supernatural use for it."⁶²⁷ Hinton argues that individuals may come to understand their experiences of pain as "the carrying out of man's redemption."⁶²⁸ Such experiences of pain "identify themselves, in meaning and in the end, with the suffering of Christ."⁶²⁹ He believes that to recognize such a

⁶²⁷ Simone Weil, Gravity and Grace, tr. Arthur Wills (New York: G.P. Putnam's Sons, 1952), 132.

⁶²⁸ James Hinton, The Mystery of Pain (Boston: Cupples, Upham and Company, 1886), 24.

⁶²⁹ *Ibid*, 25.

salvific understanding of pain creates an inversion in how individuals perceive their hardships and pain, no longer as an inexplicable mystery but as martyrdom and sacrifice for humanity.

To connect all our experience with such an end would enable us to read it entirely anew. For by giving to our pains a place of use and of necessity, not centered on ourselves, but extending to others, and indeed affecting others chiefly, as existing for, and essential to, God's great work in the world;—by giving to our painful experience this place, its whole aspect would be altered. It would come within the sphere of that pain which is capable of being the instrument of joy; which exhibits the highest good we can in our present state attain,—the pain, that is, of martyrdom and sacrifice.⁶³⁰

Hinton's theology of pain takes on metaphysical qualities when he says, "We must, therefore, accept pain as a fact existing by deep necessity, having its root in the essential order of the world." In another place he says,

And do not the very pain and loss by which man is surrounded, if we read them rightly, testify to the same thing? Not accidentally, not arbitrarily, do these assail him. They are rooted in the essential conditions of his being; they are inseparable from the structure of the world, and the relations which he bears to it. The individual must be sacrificed and suffer loss. It is his inevitable lot; the total order of nature must be altered ere he could escape it. The necessity for sacrifice is built into the structure of our being; it is the birthright, the inalienable inheritance of life.⁶³¹

Thus, Hinton moves from a theology of pain into a metaphysical position about the nature of the world.

⁶³⁰ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 16.

⁶³¹ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 64f.

What causes Hinton to move from simply stating a theological concept about the usefulness of pain to making a statement about the basic structure of the world? Hinton intimates an answer in The Mystery of Pain when he mentions the place of science in the advancement of knowledge.

So far we have learnt, that what we directly and naturally perceive in the things around us, and the events which happen to us, was never meant to be the guide to our thoughts respecting them. A chief part of the value of science, indeed, consists in bringing into our knowledge, and so into our practical use, that which is not within our consciousness, and which our senses can only indirectly, or even not at all, perceive. Scientific knowledge consists in regarding the unseen; in looking at things which are in one sense invisible.⁶³²

Towards the end of the work, Hinton further insists that science, philosophy and religion coalesce to show us that a proper understanding of pain in the world requires insights beyond our ordinary perception.

In so far as these thoughts respecting pain depend on a recognition of unseen ends served by it, it seems to me that the recent tendency of the human mind is wonderfully, and surely most happily, in harmony with them. What better could the students of Nature and the students of Humanity agree in telling us than this—their great lesson in these modern days—that the true essence and meaning of all things is hidden from our natural sight? What is this but to echo back the words we have so familiarly heard from childhood upward, till they have perhaps partly lost their force, which bid us live as seeing the invisible, and walk, not by sight but by faith? If this is the last lesson of science, it is also the first lesson of religion; perhaps now better to be learnt than ever before, and better

⁶³² Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 22.

understood, because reiterated from this new region, and enforced by this new evidence. To understand or feel our life aright, we must regard something not visible to ourselves: we must, in fact, be using faith. This, science tells us; this, philosophy.⁶³³

At first consideration, Hinton's connections seem like stretches. What does pain have to do with the structure of nature? How does science help us to understand the theological significance of pain? The Mystery of Pain only hints at Hinton's metaphysical perspective. We must explore some of his other writings to see the epistemological, metaphysical and ethical development of his position relating to his scientific outlook.

In Hinton's Man and His Dwelling Place, An Essay towards the Interpretation of Nature (1859), Hinton makes the following assertion:

We cannot see God as He is, for we see ourselves instead. We cannot see Him in nature, for we put our own deadness into it. We draw our thought of God not from that which IS, but from that which we feel to be, and make Him a self-seeker like ourselves. God is not to be seen in nature, as we see it. The fact would teach us God, but the phenomenon will not. He is such as the true being of nature would show Him; not such as we infer from nature as we feel it.⁶³⁴

Hinton is using Kant's epistemological concepts of phenomena and noumena. However, Hinton's use of the concepts reveals a departure from Kant's theory of knowledge. Kant insists,

The division of objects into phenomena and noumena, and of the world into a mundus sensibilis and intelligibilis is therefore quite inadmissible in

⁶³³ Hinton, Mystery of Pain, 98.

⁶³⁴ James Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, An Essay towards the Interpretation of Nature (New York: Redfield, 1859): 126.

a positive sense, although conceptions do certainly admit of such a division; for the class of noumena have no determinate object corresponding to them, and cannot possess objective validity.⁶³⁵

In contrast to Kant, Hinton posits like Hegel that the noumenal is knowable through the phenomenal. Hegel says, “Raised above perception, consciousness reveals itself united and bound up with the supersensible world through the mediating agency of the realm of appearance, through which it gazes into this background that lies behind appearance.”⁶³⁶

Hinton thinks that to recognize that our understanding of nature is phenomenal allows us the ability to conceptualize the noumenal behind the phenomenal.

It is evident that for the theory of the universe we want only the Divine act: 'In Him we live and move and have our being.' Neither force nor resistance belongs to matter; both are motion. The resistance and other properties of matter are nothing; see how electricity and other forces act similar parts; the passive air becoming the deadly lightning. Force is the one idea; and force is act—God's act. How close this brings us to God: we are His Deed; all around us is His Deed. And yet how far is this from pantheism. Nature, being God's act, cannot be God: the absolute all-ness of the Divine Being and yet the distinction between Him and His works, are both perfectly maintained. If the universe be thus regarded as an act of God, the need for the actual existence of matter disappears; it is not only unnecessary, but it becomes an impertinence. What medium or vehicle is wanted for God's action? —monstrous thought, that would make not matter dependent upon God, but God dependent upon matter. Nothing but God was before He acted, and when He acts still nothing is but God. No

⁶³⁵ Immanuel Kant, Critique of Pure Reason, Trans. J.M.D. Meiklejohn (London: George Bell and Sons, 1878): 187.

⁶³⁶ G.W.F. Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, Tr. J. B. Ballie (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1910): 161f.

substance but God. What should God need to underlie His work? Must He, as man when he would work, lay a ' material substratum ' first?⁶³⁷

We can see that Hinton is using the epistemological categories of noumena and phenomena to create a metaphysical model of the world. For Hinton, humanity phenomenally perceives the universe as material. However, behind the materiality of the universe, the noumenal act of God exists.

Hinton's denial of the existence of matter is not an adoption of idealism. The rejection of matter for Hinton arises from his theoretical conception of chemistry, not idealism. Hinton is wrestling with atomic conceptions available to him.

The perplexity that still is in physics is probably much from the ' atom,' or molecule, not being yet recognized as a true *point* (or infinitesimal): the conception of true substance still adheres to it, though not entirely. Here is the philosophy of Boscovich's conception, surely—as *points*, surrounded by infinite spheres of force ; but was he not wrong in introducing space again ; is not the true ' infinite' the point itself ? Substance comes, in physics as in metaphysics, from action of the ' point'—the atom or molecule; it is secondary, and not primary . . . it is chemistry that especially relates to the atomic or molecular ; i.e. to the point or infinitesimal. It is in this especially distinguished from physics; and here is the key to it: it is the Science of infinitesimals. How strange that we slid to think of it emphatically as the Science of *substances*. There must be a deep meaning here, when it is truly substance that it expressly ignores: mass is nothing ; *quality*, i. e. action, alone is concerned [save quite indirectly]. The doctrine of atoms is the doctrine of *points*.⁶³⁸

⁶³⁷ James Hinton, Selections from Manuscripts: Volume II (London: Theo Johnson, 1856): 776.

⁶³⁸ Hinton, Selections from Manuscripts, Vol. II, 17f.

Hinton overstates his case that “mass is nothing.” Boscovich’s theory was moving in the direction of Einstein’s theory of the relativity of mass. L. L. Whyte says,

As a kinematic thinker, treating mass, density, and force as secondary concepts derivable from structural and kinematic principles, Boscovich is closer to Einstein than to Newton. Of course Boscovich, writing in Latin in 1758 and lacking the equipment of dimensional theory, did not make clear the changed status of ‘mass’ in his theory. Yet he came very close to stating it.⁶³⁹

Hinton sees mass as phenomenal. Energy or action becomes the noumenal reality for Hinton that reveals God’s creative activity. In another place, Hinton insists, “Chemistry is befooled by matter, dealing with an idea as if it were a real existence. It also must become dynamical, and recognize that its only objects are actions . . . All that the chemist works upon or regards must be to him only so much and such kinds of motion.”⁶⁴⁰

Hinton’s chemistry ultimately leads him to reject Berkeley’s idealism. Berkeley rejects matter for spirit, but Hinton rejects matter conceived as inactive.

Berkeley's argument on matter seems to fail in one respect,—namely, that he regards external objects as the action of God upon the mind or spirit. The true view is that they are the absolute action of an infinite being, independent of any percipient. Of this divine action our minds are a part, not our spirits, which are active beings. The essential idea of being, indeed, is that active power which we call the attribute of the spirit. This, or free-will, is the essential mystery of existence. Existence is spiritual; all existences are active—*i.e.*, spirits. To Act is to Be. Berkeley denied the positive element, the external existence separate from us or our minds, or

⁶³⁹ L. L. Whyte, “R. J. Boscovich, S.J., F.R.S. (1711-1787), and the Mathematics of Atomism,” Notes and Records of the Royal Society of London 13, no. 1 (1958): 46 of 38-48.

⁶⁴⁰ Hinton, Life and Letters, 121.

any mind. I deny the negative element (or elements), the non-action. For this is the proposition, matter = a non-acting existence (or substance). Berkeley denies the existence; I, the inaction.⁶⁴¹

God's creative activity according to Hinton is ultimately sacrificial.

For in truth a just thought of the Creative Act seems not so impossible when we remember that God is Love . . . In self-sacrifice, therefore, we must find the truest conception of creation. Love, sacrificing self: God limiting Himself as it were, giving up Himself for the creature's life; in this most truly may we present to ourselves creation. As Creator, not less than as Redeemer, is God revealed to us in Christ.⁶⁴²

Thus, for Hinton, creation is the phenomenal revelation of the noumenal reality of God's creative-sacrificial activity. Nature reflects God's creative-sacrificial activity through its sacrificial order.

In nature everything is sacrificed to everything. May we not say: that which is sacrificed is in time; that which sacrifices itself is eternal. The one passes, the other is; one is the form, the other is the fact. The fact, the only fact, is that which sacrifices itself.⁶⁴³

Nature's cycle of life springing from death preeminently reveals an image of God's redemptive activity in creation for Hinton.

And yet once more our hearts turn to Nature as their guide. What is it that is imaged there? What fact presents to our eyes this scene of mingled life and death, of ruin and of order, and reveals to our more humble and instructed gaze life springing out of death, ruling decay, embracing ruin as its instrument? What is it shows us becoming as its constant law; the loss

⁶⁴¹ Hinton, Life and Letters, 121f.

⁶⁴² Hinton, Man and His Dwelling Place, 254f.

⁶⁴³ Hinton, Selections from Manuscripts, Volume II, 431.

of each thing for the being of each other; all giving itself for all; life dying that other life may be; dying, but in that very death most truly living?

What fact is imaged here? What is the keynote of this mingled harmony? Do we not hear it in one word —Redemption? Of death, and life raised up from death; of life bestowed by death, and perfected through it; of sacrifice, which is the law of being and the root of joy; of these things Nature speaks to us.⁶⁴⁴

Thus, Hinton's metaphysical conceptualization of the world is that the activity or energy within the world originates in God's kenotic sacrifice and that nature reflects the sacrificial-activity of God in creation through energy's conservation and nature's life cycles.

Hinton's metaphysical perspective that the phenomenal world reveals the noumenal reality of God's creative-sacrificial activity becomes the foundation for Hinton's altruistic ethics.

God does not let the smallest atom be placed in opposition to its affinities or tendencies but to effect a higher function; not one is allowed to suffer but for a vastly higher end. And so with man. Not one pang is inflicted upon him, not one felicity withheld, one tendency restrained, but for the purpose of nutrition and subservience to a function. We must liberate ourselves from the thralldom of thinking that we are the object of creation. We are part of it; elements forming part of the universal life; we must be content to bear our share of nutrition, and offer up ourselves willing instruments in the production of the function; yield gladly our bodies to suffering, our hearts to sorrow, our desires to disappointment; bear our part in the great life, ennobling and exalting it by willing subservience.⁶⁴⁵

⁶⁴⁴ Hinton, Life in Nature, 216.

⁶⁴⁵ Hinton, Philosophy and Religion, 243.

God creates through self-sacrifice; nature phenomenally reflects God's sacrifice in the way that all life depends on the bountiful supply of the created world.

Have I made you see, or rather feel, what I mean by altruistic being? how love is the expression of the fact of God's existence? How all goodness is *embodied* in His nature? Do not you feel this, at least, that, taking the world and nature as it is, at the worst, though we cannot perhaps explain fully any one thing, yet altogether it does consent to be *the phenomenon of a life that is in sacrifice?*⁶⁴⁶

Hinton moves from epistemology to metaphysics and from metaphysics to ethics.

From our consideration of Hinton's movement from epistemology to metaphysics to ethics, we can see something of his basic method of philosophical speculation. Hinton is trying to create a holistic system based on his scientific, philosophical and religious outlook. His basic operating principle is that human knowledge advances through a combination of the senses, the intellect and the moral imagination.

I note that the Greeks used both sense and intellect as means of gaining knowledge, but that they used them, as it were, separately. Accordingly, some of their best minds expressly held (in some sort) a sense world and an intellect world. Now science differs from that old mode of using the powers in this (partly), that we use sense and intellect unitedly; that is, our intellect works, not away from, but upon the materials furnished by sense. It does not erect another world upon the sensible, but interprets the sensible. Our world, as recognized by science, is the Greek sensible world and intelligible world united. Now, besides sense and intellect, we have also emotions, conscience, etc., not apart from the other powers, but at the same time not to be merely sunk in them.

⁶⁴⁶ Hinton, Life and Letters, 225. Hinton italicizes for emphasis.

My position is this: that we use this power—let me call it the moral reason—separately from our (now united) sense and intellect, and that our business is to learn to use it unitedly with them. Some among us now invent a 'spiritual world,' apart from this world; others deny it. I affirm of it that it has the same right, and the same no-right to be affirmed, as the Platonic intelligible world; that the invention of it at once vouches for the existence of a legitimate power in man, and proves its misapplication ; and that what man has to do, and will do, is to leave off using the moral reason in this false way, and bring it to its true use, which is, not to invent another world, but to interpret this; and that, as uniting (the falsely disunited) sense and intellect has given us science (and this through a perfectly intelligible process in history), so uniting these powers and the moral reason, and using them in the same way together, will give us philosophy (as defined). That is, that as the intellect tests the appearances to sense, and interprets them into the phenomenal (the scientifically true), so the moral reason .in man can and will test the 'phenomena' the intellect presents, and interpret them into something—truer than our present meaning of the word phenomenon. I use this language because I do not wish to affirm this to be the absolute; it may be only another deeper order of phenomena for all I care. Only I affirm it will be related to our present idea of phenomena, as our present phenomena are to the mere appearances to sense.⁶⁴⁷

Hinton's statement of his philosophical method reveals that he sees the philosophical limitation of his work. Despite trying to use Hegel's idea that the noumenal is knowable through the phenomenal, Hinton here admits that he recognizes that a Kantian gap exists between the phenomenal and noumenal realms. Hinton's true aim in his metaphysical speculation is ultimately ethical. To come to a proper appreciation of Hinton's philosophy, we must now consider it in light of antecedents beyond Hegel and Kant.

⁶⁴⁷ Hinton, Life and Letters, 113f.

Hinton is responding to problems he sees in natural theology and vitalism.

Phenomenology allows Hinton to grasp the excesses and abuses of natural theology and vitalism.

II. Antecedents to Hinton's Metaphysical Speculation: Natural Theology and Vitalism

Hinton recognized that to apprehend nature as phenomenal allows him to reject concepts within natural theology and vitalism that were problematic. The foremost problems arising from natural theology and vitalism for Hinton are their tendencies toward otherworldliness and their penchant to accept social order as a given. Scholars have recently noticed the penchant of British natural theology to reinforce the social status quo.

Since natural theology directed itself against atheists and intellectual enemies whose ideas allegedly endangered the social order, natural theologians functioned as much as defenders of contemporary social arrangements and their underlying values as they did of science. They sought to demonstrate not only that science did not endanger religion but also that science and natural theology positively embraced contemporary commercial values. Science provided evidence of God's existence and also new means to make nature useful to human beings and profitable to commercial trade and other economic activity. Natural theology thus brought nature, science, and contemporary British society into the embrace of divine purpose. Science and natural theology supported each other and in turn the social order.⁶⁴⁸

Hinton views vitalism in a similar light. According to Elizabeth Grosz, "Vitalism is the philosophical commitment to a specific life force, a life energy, which distinguishes the

⁶⁴⁸ Frank Miller Turner, Contesting Cultural Authority: Essays in Victorian Intellectual Life (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993): 104.

organic from the inorganic . . . Vitalism is committed to the belief that the organism is greater than the sum of its parts, while mechanism claims that the unity of the organism comes from its particular ingredients in their specific configurations.”⁶⁴⁹ Hinton views both natural theology and vitalism as avenues that disregard social ills for utilitarian purposes. As Hinton’s epistemology and metaphysical outlook tended toward altruism, the social constructs of natural theology and vitalism became his main combatants. He opposes the utilitarian conception of sacrifice that sees the individual as only a function for the whole. He wants to turn the concept on its head by exposing such an understanding as parasitic. To understand fully Hinton’s opposition to the tendency of natural theology to support social ills, we must now consider its expression in the thought of William Paley and Hinton’s response to it. We will then consider Hinton’s reaction to vitalism.

Paley’s watchmaker analogy argues for the existence of a benevolent God through the evidences of nature’s design.⁶⁵⁰ In Paley’s estimation, “It is a happy world after all. The air, the earth, the water, teem with delighted existence.”⁶⁵¹ The problem with such an argument is that nature seldom appears benevolent. Violence, death, starvation and privation appear to be the norms of the natural world. Paley counters this problem with the concepts of contrivance and probation.

Contrivance is Paley’s idea that all of the workings of nature reveal benevolent purposes.

⁶⁴⁹ Elizabeth Grosz, Becomings: Explorations in Time, Memory, and Futures (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999):

⁶⁵⁰ William Paley, Natural Theology, or Evidences of the Existence and Attributes of the Deity (Oxford: J. Vincent, 1826).

⁶⁵¹ Paley, Natural Theology, 151.

Contrivance proves design: and the predominant tendency of the contrivance indicates the disposition of the designer. The world abounds with contrivances: and all the contrivances which we are acquainted with, are directed to beneficial purposes. Evil, no doubt, exists; but is never, that we can perceive, the *object* of contrivance. Teeth are contrived to eat, not to ache; their aching now and then is incidental to the contrivance, perhaps inseparable from it: or even, if you will, let it be called a defect in the contrivance; but it is not the object of it.⁶⁵²

Thus, for Paley, contrivances are always beneficial. To bolster the idea that nature as God's contrivance is always beneficial, Paley asserts that God's design super-abounds with pleasure: "The Deity has added pleasure to animal sensations beyond what was necessary for any other purpose; or when the purpose, so far as it was necessary, might have been effected by the operation of pain."⁶⁵³ Therefore, for Paley, pleasure ultimately outweighs pain in the world of God's contrivance.

The notion of probation is another way that Paley bolsters his argument that we live in a benevolently designed world where pleasure outweighs pain.

But since the contrivances of nature decidedly evince *intention*; and since the course of the world and the contrivances of nature have the same author; we are, by the force of this connection, led to believe, that the appearance under which events take place, is reconcilable with the supposition of design on the part of the Deity. It is enough that they be reconcilable with this supposition; and it is undoubtedly true, that they may be reconcilable, though we cannot reconcile them. The mind, however, which contemplates the works of Nature, and in those works sees so much of means directed to ends, of beneficial effects brought about by wise expedients, of concerted trains of causes terminating in the

⁶⁵² Paley, Natural Theology, 247.

⁶⁵³ Paley, Natural Theology, 181.

happiest results; so much, in a word, of counsel, intention, and benevolence; a mind, I say, drawn into the habit of thought which these observations excite, can hardly turn its view to the condition of our own species, without endeavoring to suggest to itself some purpose, some design, for which the state in which we are placed is fitted, and which it is made to serve. Now we assert the most probable supposition to be, that it is a state of moral probation; and that many things in it suit with this hypothesis, which suit no other. It is not a state of unmixed happiness, or of happiness simply: it is not a state of designed misery, or of misery simply: it is not a state of retribution: it is not a state of punishment. It suits with none of these suppositions. It accords much better with the idea of its being a condition calculated for the production, exercise, and improvement of moral qualities, with a view to a future state, in which these qualities, after being so produced, exercised, and improved, may, by a new and more favoring constitution of things, receive their reward, or become their own.⁶⁵⁴

Thus, the ultimate implication of nature as God's benevolent contrivance in Paley is the idea that humanity finds itself in a sort of test. Amidst the vagaries of the contrived world, humanity is on probation for another world. The standard of the test is moral improvement. The pains of life are simply testing us for another world. Paley ultimately tries to make his natural theology palatable through "the balancing of moral accounts in the hereafter of eternity."⁶⁵⁵

As a scientist, philosopher and Christian, Hinton ultimately rejects Paley's otherworldliness as a veil concealing the malfunctioning nature of British society. While Hinton is reticent to name Paley as his opponent, his writings show a regular rejection of

⁶⁵⁴ Paley, Natural Theology, 209.

⁶⁵⁵ Turner, Contesting Cultural Authority, 110.

the notions of probation and contrivance. As far as I can find, Hinton only names Paley once in his writings. The passage itself tends toward the innocuous:

The doctrine of virtue or moral rightness being that which most promotes happiness [Paley's doctrine], goes with that view of natural theology, which sees in creation only God's wisdom in the sense of design and skill. Nature truly viewed teaches a better lesson; she is law, she does not exist for results.⁶⁵⁶

Despite the scarcity of references to Paley by name, Hinton regularly attacks the otherworldliness and utilitarian social consequences of Paley's natural theology. Why does Hinton avoid attacking Paley openly? Paley's popularity in Britain was sacrosanct to the social order. John Gascoigne notes, "Paley's works proved remarkably popular, particularly at Cambridge where the *Principles* became a set text within a year of its publication . . . , and the *Evidences* continued to be prescribed until 1921."⁶⁵⁷ Openly opposing Paley's thought was tantamount to espousing atheism and revolution.

Hinton's epistemological, metaphysical and ethical speculations ultimately left him denouncing the otherworldliness and utilitarian consequences of Paley's ideas of contrivance and probation. Hinton saw Paley's concepts of contrivances and probation as fundamentally ignoring the ongoing work of God within the world. He says, "Nothing can be more completely the condemnation of our theology than this: that it prevents our seeing anything spiritual in all things; its doctrine of 'probation' compels us to regard the mass of human events only in their temporal bearings." Unlike Paley's watchmaker,

⁶⁵⁶ James Hinton, Selections from Manuscripts, Volume I (London: Theo Johnson, 1856): 707.

⁶⁵⁷ John Gascoigne, Cambridge in the Age of the Enlightenment: Science, Religion and Politics (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002): 243.

Hinton sees God's activity in the world as ongoing in the world. God does not simply contrive the world machine and withdrawal allowing the machine to operate. God's creativity is ongoing and unending in the world.

Things are more than we imagine them: also, nature is holiness and not contrivance; there is more than contrivance, more than that which pertains to the phenomenon. Holiness pertains to the fact, contrivance only to the phenomenon; the greater excludes the less. As the phenomenon *is* not, so contrivance is not, it cannot pertain to the fact; where contrivance is, time is, inaction, not creation.⁶⁵⁸

Thus, Hinton believes that natural theology wrongly conceives of God's relation to nature temporally. Nature, for Hinton, is God's ongoing work. In another place, Hinton characterizes the temporal notion of natural theology as moving toward atheism:

To affirm special creation, is a step towards atheism. The certain effect of introducing God specially into the past is to exclude Him just so much from the present. A reality is exchanged for an hypothesis; a seen and felt reality for an inconceivable hypothesis. The universe in truth is full of God; so full that nothing can be added thereto. No possible mode of regarding Him as working can bring Him closer than He is. Only those whose God is afar off can even conceive of Him as brought nearer. It is our privilege, and a privilege full of exquisite joy it is, to see that God does all things so directly, that it is impossible He can do anything more directly. No cause, nor chain of causes, has intervened; God did it: God does it: just as directly, just in the same sense, as He is supposed to "create a species." If any one says this makes no difference, I repeat that he cannot know till he has tried how much he loses by referring God's immediate agency to the past. If that idea has any excellence or virtue, if it be glorious or delightful, if it be true, let us have it now. It sanctifies

⁶⁵⁸ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 169.

the world and makes it holy; a sacred, awful, joyous thing is that which God is doing. And worst of all, the best of people with the best of motives, are committing Christianity to a scientific hypothesis. It must not be. Christianity is too precious to be, not indeed imperiled, but impeded so. It matters not whether the hypothesis be false, as we think it, or true as so many hold; the point is, that the oak shall not cling to the ivy. The remedy for apparently irreligious scientific dogmas is not to affirm a contrary scientific dogma, but to show that Nature is so full of God that no scientific doctrine, rightly stated, can be irreligious.⁶⁵⁹

Hinton charges natural theology as tending toward atheism because it conceives God as absent from the world's ongoing activity. The God of natural theology transcends nature, but Hinton argues that God is immanent in nature as the source of its activity and power.

To avoid making God's immanence in nature into a new form of contrivance, Hinton's ethical position becomes clear when he ridicules the ethical implications of natural theology's supposed contrivances.

With regard to the 'design' manifested in the various 'contrivances' observed in the animal structure; e. g. the teeth of the Megalosaurus, which combine what 'human ingenuity has adopted in the knife, sabre, and saw,' (Buckland): this is the idea of it, and it is well to see it so. Should we not also admire God's skill in the cannon, &c., which He constructs thro' the mental life, as these teeth thro' the bodily? What wonder our religion is such as it is? But it is well to see this argument developed to this point, for in truth this vice is inherent in its very basis; it emphatically puts the 'not' for the fact. All these contrivances which are so admired are for selfish objects, for getting; they represent the 'not,' not the fact. The most delicate and beautiful, almost without exception, have this

⁶⁵⁹ James Hinton, Philosophy and Religion, ed. Caroline Haddon (London: Kegan Paul, Trench & Co., 1881): 78f.

taint of selfishness as completely as the most repulsive. And here is the clue to them: they are all ‘gettings,’ and we shall only interpret them or see them aright when we can see them as ‘givings.’⁶⁶⁰

Hinton’s contrast between ‘getting’ and ‘giving’ is unclear in the above passage, but another passage sheds light on Hinton’s use of the contrast.

Nature is two-fold --either giving, love, actual; or getting, selfish, inert; according to him who regards it. These two are the same, with and without 'act' respectively. So that that which we look on and see all inert, to another Being shall be all love; to us all evil, to Him full of glory and perfect joy. So two Beings may be side by side, close to each other, with no external difference; yet the one shall be in time, the other in eternity.⁶⁶¹

Thus, for Hinton, the fact that nature is red in tooth and claw does not require an infusion of benevolence understood as contrivances. Natural theology falsely imbues creation with a super-abundance of benevolence because its view of nature is one-sided. Natural theology only sees nature as getting and taking. Paley’s natural theology fails to see the two-sided character of benevolence as getting and giving in both nature and Christianity.

Hinton says,

Christ reveals the *fact*: the fact of all nature; that of love, self-sacrifice, life given for life. It must be seen in Him—He shows us what it is. It is all so: this is life, the only life, the life of nature also. But we cannot see it; there being in us no fact, no life. So we see not giving, but taking; as in instincts, one preying upon another; we see Being sacrificed. So we in ourselves too, we are conscious of getting and not giving, and therewith of being sacrificed; i. e. of evil. Here is a connection also: getting, or sacrificing others for ourselves, and being sacrificed, go necessarily

⁶⁶⁰ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 649f.

⁶⁶¹ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 111.

together; we see it in nature, all animals prey, but there is none that also is not sacrificed itself. This is beautiful: selfishness is necessarily evil.⁶⁶²

In the natural world, what appears as evil, painful, or malevolent is equally good, pleasant, or beneficent when viewed at another vantage.

Hinton uses the concept of benevolence's two-sides to develop his understanding of altruism. In a passage that echoes natural theologies' idea of a happy world, Hinton wryly suggests that a correct conception of the world goes beyond the single-sided phenomenal apprehension of it.

Wonderful is this world: every one having as it were to seek his own good at another's loss —this 'competition:' each one taking for himself instead of another having. It is evidently the necessary phenomenon *to the self* of an altruistic world. It is only the converse of that constitution of the world—a necessary opposite view of it. It being constructed on the truly good plan—that of sacrifice, the self given up to others—necessarily from the self-view, according to the self-action, it is this opposite of the self-getting at the expense of others.⁶⁶³

For Hinton, recognition of the altruistic nature of the universe frees us from natural theologies' ideas of benevolent contrivances and probation and becomes his model for understanding redemption.

In another passage tinged with irony, Hinton shows how the notions of probation and contrivances ignore the redemptive work of God in the world.

'We all have more than we deserve.' Is it not monstrous? Look at a child born among the poor and deprived; what is inflicted upon it before it can deserve at all. How can God put men here 'to see how they will behave,'

⁶⁶² Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 368.

⁶⁶³ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 257.

and then deal with them so? Even if this ‘probation’ is a right and natural thought at first, it is disproved by experience. There must be some other objects than we (naturally) see, which make God bring children so into the world. It is as Jacob and Esau: before any worthiness of either, the decree was made. The probation-idea is expressly excluded; against it God's decrees are asserted. But the absolute redemption lies at the root.⁶⁶⁴

God is working out human redemption in the world. Nature’s altruism informs Hinton’s understanding of God’s work of human redemption.

Have I not here a help to many things: e. g., we are not born as it were arbitrarily and without necessity into this world of evil, to be tried and proved, and some to be saved; but this being of man in the physical is the very fact of the redemption of man . . . Redemption and development are the fact, not probation.⁶⁶⁵

Hinton intimates a glimpse of how God’s work of redemption impacts society

And here is the physical redemption of man, i. e. of Society— men learning to know that the true object of their activities is not their own well-being but that of others. To make this our end—in trade e.g. not to get rich but to supply wants—is getting out of error and ignorance; so it must be good. Evil must be negation; all good is merely knowing that which *is*. This subservience to others *is* what we exist and enjoy for; and if we make any other our end, if we indulge self instead, we are under illusion and necessarily suffer.⁶⁶⁶

Thus, Hinton rejects natural theology’s contrivances and probation as an otherworldly orientation that ignores God’s ongoing work of redemption in the world via sacrifice and

⁶⁶⁴ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 203.

⁶⁶⁵ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 542.

⁶⁶⁶ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 157.

altruism. For Hinton, natural theology's concepts of contrivances and probation instill a social order where individuals accumulate wealth at the expense of others. Such a social conception ignores God's work in nature where sacrifice works to enable and further the entire system. For Hinton, humanity is acting in a parasitic way. To appreciate this insight of Hinton, we must now consider his opposition to vitalism.

Vitalism is the belief that the principles of organic life are unexplainable in terms of the laws of inorganic matter. William Prout, a contributor to the *Bridge Water Treatises on Natural Theology*, says,

In short, the Living principle, as already pointed out, is something different from, and superadded to the common agencies of matter; over which, to a certain extent, it has a control. Thus, the phenomena exhibited by the mysterious agency of life, are strictly comparable only with one another; and have no relation to any inorganic phenomena.”⁶⁶⁷

Prout also argues that the unique use of chemical properties by living forms evinces design. He says, “Hence the adaptations of mechanical arrangements, in the structure of organized beings, to the pre-existing chemical properties of matter, affords an evidence of design, not less impressive than unequivocal.”⁶⁶⁸ Lionel Beale, a contemporary of Hinton, makes a similar assertion:

I cannot but conclude from my investigations that the living is separated from non-living by an impassible barrier –by a gulf that will not soon be bridged over; that matter and its ordinary forces and properties belong to

⁶⁶⁷ William Prout, *The Bridgewater Treatises on the Power, Wisdom and Goodness of God as Manifested in the Creation: Treatise VIII, Chemistry, Meteorology and the Function of Digestion* (London: William Pickering, 1834): 550.

⁶⁶⁸ Prout, 540.

one category or order and that creative power, and will, design, and mind, and life, ought to be included in a very different order indeed.⁶⁶⁹

We must recall at this point that Hinton's criticism of natural theology's arguments from design focuses on its utilitarian construction that emphasizes only what one gets from nature. It fails to see the two sides of God's redemptive structure within nature where every 'getting' is also a 'giving' in sacrifice. In a critique of Beale's conception of vitalism, Hinton characterizes vitalism as parasitic. He says,

Nature seems to us not living, as to a parasite inhabiting our own bodies (supposing it endowed with power to compare and reason) its own life would seem the only life, merely because it was proportionately small; and the body it inhabited would seem a great inorganic universe: mighty torrents of revolving stars, and slow oscillations of attracting and repelling masses, interrupted at long epochs by cataclysms of swift and wide-spread ruin. What would it see of the great human life it fed on?⁶⁷⁰

For Hinton, the problem with vitalism is that it ignores the dependence of organic life upon the inorganic. The relationship between the organic and the inorganic in vitalism is utilitarian.

In an effort to counter the utilitarian concept of vitalism, Hinton says, "So vital entity must not be negatively denied; it must be altruistically affirmed: life seen in all Nature."⁶⁷¹ Hinton attempts to invert how people think of organic life. He suggests that

⁶⁶⁹ Lionel Beale, An Essay in Reply to Dr. Gull's Attack on the Theory of Vitality (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1871): 64.

⁶⁷⁰ James Hinton, "Critique on the Doctrine of Vital Force," Medical Times and Gazette 1 (1867): 180 of 177-180.

⁶⁷¹ James Hinton, Selections from Manuscripts, Volume III (London: Theo Johnson, 1874):

the difference between the inorganic and organic is the way that the organic forms an “isolated individuality.”⁶⁷²

In what, then, does the organic differ?—evidently only in form; and especially in being individual (complete in itself); but that is being ‘isolated.’ Is not the inorganic altruistic? Is not this its distinction from the so-called ‘organic’? Nay is there not, in brief, an inversion here—the inorganic the truly living? for is not this ‘isolated individuality’ which characterizes, and is the only distinction of, the inorganic—death? So, instead of the organic being more, it is less. Evidently the isolated individuality of the organic is by limit, by negation. By self-isolation the organic is distinguished from the inorganic, and by that only.⁶⁷³

While vitalism conceives that the organic uses the inorganic in a special way, Hinton argues that the dependence of the organic upon inorganic atoms reveals a “vital wrongness” that requires an altruistic interpretation.

If our hearts are crushed and done violence to by the *evil* that is in the world, so are the elements which constitute our bodies, crushed and put wrong: -- if individual men thus suffer and are thwarted and cast into the wrongest positions, so are individual atoms. *We* are truly but atoms in a great living frame, and we endure consciously, and as suffering, the vital wrongness . . . These also are a part of nature, and to be cultivated, directed, made life-producing.⁶⁷⁴

Hinton ultimately opposes vitalism’s utilitarian conceptualization because it fails to notice life’s dependence upon chemical structure. In accord with his understanding of nature as altruistic, he believes that even chemical compounds reveal a type of altruistic

⁶⁷² Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. III, 399.

⁶⁷³ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. III, 399.

⁶⁷⁴ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. I, 217.

character: “The idea of chemicity is simply making ‘properties’ dependent on the constitution of the whole:--altruistic instead of ‘self.’”⁶⁷⁵ Therefore, we can distinguish Hinton’s altruistic conceptualization from vitalism’s utilitarian conceptualization. Hinton emphasizes the dependence of the organism on its parts, but vitalism insists that the organism is greater than the sum of its parts. Hinton’s altruistic emphasis on the dependence of the organism on its parts focuses his social ethics toward the weakest parts of society.

Is it not the truth that because men are truly parts, and only phenomenally individual wholes, therefore the men who are not perfect as individuals may be truly the best? In them most may the good of man be effected, the true use and work of man most fulfilled. May it not be so even in those whose individual life is most marred, the bad, the utterly failing? Think of the abortive cells in an organic body. If the cells of such a body were separately regarded, and estimated according to their perfection as *cells*, cancer cells would seem much above nerve cells. Think of the criminal class, the imperfect men. So our preference for ‘complete men’ may be an exact inversion, a preference of the self-good.⁶⁷⁶

Ultimately, Hinton characterizes society as parasitic and/or cancerous in its emphasis on the organism over individuals. Vitalism and natural theology are in Hinton’s estimation sources of utilitarianism that disregard the plight of the individual for the sake of the whole.

III. Usefulness of Hinton’s Philosophy: The Relation of Darwin to Natural Theology

Natural theology’s emphasis on beneficent contrivances, otherworldly probation, and design established a climate that was ripe for the rejection of God in the name of

⁶⁷⁵ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. III

⁶⁷⁶ James Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. II, 212.

science in the mid-Nineteenth Century. As scientists, like Darwin and Huxley, examined nature, they found no evidence to support theistic design and benevolent contrivances. Natural theology had argued that benevolence and design were everywhere for the casual observer to behold, but the argument could not bear the weight of the discoveries of the mid-Nineteenth Century. Darwin's theory of natural selection made the theistic design argument superfluous. He offered a natural explanation for variety and adaptation of species. The perception of nature shifted during this time from a world of benevolent contrivance to a world that was red in tooth and claw. The rift between science and theology was a result of natural theology's overemphasis on benevolent contrivances. Sadly, natural theology precipitated Darwin's personal religious struggles and ultimately led to his agnosticism. In this section, we will examine the difficulty that Darwin encountered as he tried to interpret nature using natural theology. However, we will notice that his evolution toward an uneasy agnosticism arose from his continued use of natural theology to understand God. We will observe that Hinton saw Darwin's discoveries as perfectly fitting his own conception of God and nature as altruistic in opposition to natural theology. We will conclude by looking at the contemporary thought of Holmes Rolston, III, whose writings are redolent of combining Darwin and Hinton.

Darwin began his studies at Cambridge in 1828 with his family intending that he should study for the ministry.⁶⁷⁷ Darwin's friendship with the Reverend John Stevens Henslow, Professor of Botany, became the impetus for Darwin's fieldwork, and Henslow organized the opportunity for Darwin to work as a naturalist aboard the HMS

⁶⁷⁷ Cf. Ernst Mayr, The Growth of Biological Thought: Diversity, Evolution, and Inheritance (Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1982): 396.

Beagle.⁶⁷⁸ Henslow theologically reflects the tendencies of natural theology. He believed that both nature and revelation mutually reveal God's truth.

Let us be mutually tolerant, mutually confiding, and then, in due course, we shall learn to see how impossible it is that either the works of God, or the Word of God, can ever be teaching us things contradictory to truth. How far the patient study of all God's various methods of revealing to us His holy will, may be actually necessary for mutually throwing light upon each other, I will not venture to suggest. Of this I am quite sure, that where the study of God's works is combined with a sure faith in His Word, the former can in no respect impair our spiritual possession of the life that now is, or deprive us of the enjoyment of one jot or tittle of those glorious promises which have assured to us a blessed immortality.⁶⁷⁹

For Henslow, the world is a happy place manifestly revealing God's goodness with a view to eternity. Two of Jenyns' quotations of Henslow reveal these ideas:

How pleasing to hear the rooks cawing. God has made the world full of pleasing sights and pleasant sounds; He might have made everything disagreeable: it is a very good world if people will only use it aright.⁶⁸⁰

That egg would have become a living being;—how full of life the world is;—what a mystery: 'In Him we live and move and have our being': the whole world is one grand demonstration of life to encourage us in the sure conviction of life eternal.⁶⁸¹

⁶⁷⁸ Cf. Michael Ruse, The Darwinian Evolution: Science Red in Tooth and Claw (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1999): 33.

⁶⁷⁹ Leonard Jenyns, Memoir of the Rev. John Stevens Henslow (London: John Van Voorst, 1862): 154.

⁶⁸⁰ Jenyns, 257.

⁶⁸¹ Jenyns, 257.

We can see in these quotations of Henslow that he believed in the basic components of natural theology. The world super-abounds in goodness and prepares us for the next life. Darwin's training as a naturalist occurred in the climate of Henslow's natural theology with its emphasis on the goodness of nature as a preparation for eternity. Darwin's closeness to Henslow during his days at Cambridge resulted in the other students calling Darwin "the man who walks with Henslow."⁶⁸² Darwin himself admits that his beliefs were orthodox at this time.⁶⁸³

Darwin's health and family life, however, are a story of suffering. Throughout his life, Charles regularly dealt with bouts of illness including heart palpitations, headaches, and stomach troubles.⁶⁸⁴ His letters regularly refer to periods of illness. In a letter to Mrs. Haliburton recounting his fond memories and "happy old days spent at Woodhouse," Charles writes, "Excepting from my continued ill-health, which has excluded me from society, my life has been a very happy one; the greatest drawback being that several of my children have inherited from me feeble health."⁶⁸⁵ We can see in this letter a hint that Charles uses the natural theology concept that happiness in life outweighs the suffering. However, suffering within the Darwin family was significant. Charles and Emma Darwin had ten children and endured the loss of three of their offspring. Mary Eleanor Darwin was born on September 23, 1842, and died on October

⁶⁸² Staurt Max Walters and E. A. Stow, *Darwin's Mentor: John Steven Henslow, 1796-1861* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001): 80.

⁶⁸³ Charles Darwin and Francis Darwin, *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin, Volume I* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1896): 277.

⁶⁸⁴ Cf. Peter Bowler, *Charles Darwin: The Man and His Influence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990): 73.

⁶⁸⁵ Charles Darwin and Francis Darwin, *The Life and Letters of Charles Darwin: Volume II* (New York: D. Appleton and Company, 1896): 353.

16, 1842.⁶⁸⁶ Anne Elizabeth Darwin, known as Annie, died on April 25, 1851 at ten years of age.⁶⁸⁷ Charles Waring Darwin, their tenth child, died on June 28, 1858, at the age of eighteen months.⁶⁸⁸ Many scholars link Darwin's growing agnosticism to Annie's death.⁶⁸⁹ However, Darwin's agnosticism, while existentially fueled by Annie's death, ultimately arises from his continued use of natural theology's belief in an excess of happiness over suffering in the world.

When Darwin writes about religion, his categories for thinking about it come from natural theology. In a letter to Asa Gray on May 22, 1860, Darwin writes,

With respect to the theological view of the question. This is always painful to me. I am bewildered. I had no intention to write atheistically. But I own that I cannot see as plainly as others do, and as I should wish to do, evidence of design and beneficence on all sides of us. There seems to me too much misery in the world. I cannot persuade myself that a beneficent and omnipotent God would have designedly created the Ichneumonidae with the express intention of their feeding within the living bodies of Caterpillars, or that a cat should play with mice. Not believing this, I see no necessity in the belief that the eye was expressly designed.⁶⁹⁰

Darwin's major difficulty arises from the misery that he observes in nature. He ends his letter to Gray by saying, "But the more I think the more bewildered I become; as indeed I

⁶⁸⁶ Anthony Larkum, *A Natural Calling: Life, Letters and Diaries of Charles Darwin* (New York: Springer Publishing, 2009): 188.

⁶⁸⁷ Larkum, *A Natural Calling*, 214.

⁶⁸⁸ Larkum, *A Natural Calling*, 284.

⁶⁸⁹ Cf. Rebecca Steloff, *Charles Darwin and the Evolution Revolution* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996): 80.

⁶⁹⁰ Frederick Burkhardt, Samantha Evans and Alison Pearn, *Evolution: Selected Letters of Charles Darwin: 1860-1870* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008): 11.

have probably shown by this letter.”⁶⁹¹ Despite seeing such misery, Darwin continued to hold to the idea that happiness outweighs suffering. In his autobiography, he makes the following statement:

According to my judgment happiness decidedly prevails, though this would be very difficult to prove. If the truth of this conclusion be granted, it harmonizes well with the effects which we might expect from natural selection. If all the individuals of any species were habitually to suffer to an extreme degree, they would neglect to propagate their kind; but we have no reason to believe that this has ever, or at least often occurred. Some other considerations, moreover, lead to the belief that all sentient beings have been formed so as to enjoy, as a general rule, happiness.⁶⁹²

He continues later in the same reflection to defend the notion that happiness exceeds suffering:

Hence it has come to pass that most or all sentient beings have been developed in such a manner, through natural selection, that pleasurable sensations serve as their habitual guides. We see this in the pleasure from exertion, even occasionally from great exertion of the body or mind,—in the pleasure of our daily meals, and especially in the pleasure derived from sociability, and from loving our families. The sum of such pleasures as these, which are habitual or frequently recurrent, give, as I can hardly doubt, to most sentient beings an excess of happiness over misery, although many occasionally suffer much.⁶⁹³

Thus, Darwin still believes in the natural theology concept of an excess of happiness over misery. However, in the next sentence, he says, “Such suffering is quite compatible with

⁶⁹¹ Burkhardt, Evans & Pearn, 12.

⁶⁹² Charles Darwin, Life and Letters, Vol. I, 310.

⁶⁹³ Charles Darwin, Life and Letters, Vol. I, 310f.

the belief in Natural Selection, which is not perfect in its action, but tends only to render each species as successful as possible in the battle for life with other species, in wonderfully complex and changing circumstances.”⁶⁹⁴ Therefore, Darwin’s difficulty arises from his persistence in the natural theology idea that happiness super-abounds misery. Despite the fact that he sees the significant role of suffering in natural selection, his natural theology predilection will not allow a theological reformulation that embraces suffering in his belief system.

Hinton and Darwin never met. However, Hinton shows familiarity with Darwin’s views and interprets them as favorable to his own understanding of nature and the role of suffering within it. For Hinton, Darwin’s idea of constant struggle reveals life arising from death in a natural balance. However, Hinton insists that one can only appreciate this idea by going past the appearance of the struggles to see how life arises from the struggles.

Darwin's idea of the constant struggle between living creatures is good. We cannot understand the appearances, as he says, if we forget it for a moment. The same has to be done in our entire thought of Nature: we must remember the universal tension and equilibrium—of opposing forces coming into play on each ‘occasion’; one overcoming the other. Also, life shows how all is the same, only opposed in direction or mode. In this 'balance' is there not the very idea of Life?⁶⁹⁵

Darwin, for Hinton, had done an invaluable service by showing the role of struggle and extinction in relation to changes in habitat. To Hinton, Darwin was looking beyond mere appearances to how negative factors contributed to the development of life.

⁶⁹⁴ Charles Darwin, Life and Letters, Vol. I, 311.

⁶⁹⁵ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. III, 379

Darwin's idea (of the struggle and extinction of races) is not only the introduction of a negative idea, but it is that of least resistance: E.g., where he speaks of places prepared for other species by changes in the polity of Nature, &c. They are, by a constant tendency to increase . . . Darwin points out an unrecognized fact, which shows *why* the case is: and this is a negation (which causes the appearance to be).⁶⁹⁶

Hinton gloried in science's discoveries that contradicted human sense perception. Darwin's concept of struggle in natural selection ranked for Hinton beside Galileo's conception of the earth's movement and insights into the refraction of light. For Hinton, Darwin looked past natural theology's surface reading of nature to perceive the role of struggle in nature. Despite Darwin's inability to translate suffering into his personal theology, his recognition of the value of suffering in natural selection was for Hinton a proof of God's love hidden in "not-love:"

Then, if this sense-natural conviction that the earth is at rest be thus true to a deeper fact, is it not so with all our other sense-natural impressions? . . . Now, why must the true and proper rest [or stability] be perceived by the intellect, or science, as motion, while it is perceived by the primary sense-impression as rest? This seems very instructive. Is it not just as *light* (e.g.), which is perceived primarily as light, becomes to the scientific intellect *motion*, mere darkness in a certain kind of way? It is surely striking; we take our rest, and find it motion; we take our *light*, and find it *darkness*, and so with all the other elements of our perception. This cannot be without its significance. We study all the elements of our consciousness, and find them their very contraries. Does it not join itself to that necessity of each true thing to have in it its own negation? So we explore each thing, and find its negation, and this puzzles us so. - Thus it is with God's

⁶⁹⁶ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. III, 394.

love; we explore, and what a not-love we find. The negation of theology, and the relief from *cruelty* which Darwin finds, are the signs of this.⁶⁹⁷

Despite Darwin's inability to translate suffering into his own theology, his recognition of the value of suffering and struggle for natural selection was for Hinton a negation of natural theology's emphasis on contrivances that super-abounded in beneficence. The cruelty of nature that reveals 'not-love' becomes to Hinton's altruistic conception of the world a sign of the love of God.

Since Darwin and Hinton never met, we cannot speculate about how Hinton's ideas might have salvaged Darwin's faith. However, we will conclude this section by mentioning the insights of a contemporary thinker whose outlook sounds remarkably like a combination of Hinton and Darwin. Holmes Rolston, III, juxtaposes the realities of the evolutionary struggles with a Christian outlook in a view of nature as "cruciform creation."⁶⁹⁸ Rolston embraces Darwin's recognition of the struggle and connectedness of life.

Darwinian natural history reveals an ambiguity in life. Life is provided for in the system and is simultaneously a ceaseless struggle; new life is generated by blasting the old. Darwinians may accentuate the competition, "nature red in tooth and claw." Darwin as well portrays connectedness: common ancestry, survival of the best adapted, life support in ecosystems. Darwin portrays life persisting in the midst of its perpetual perishing, life generated and regenerated in spectacular biodiversity and complexity,

⁶⁹⁷ Hinton, Manuscripts, Vol. IV, 107-108.

⁶⁹⁸ Holmes Rolston, III, "Caring for Nature: From Fact to Value, From Respect to Reverence," Zygon 39, no. 2 (2004):289 of 277-302.

with exuberance displayed over three and a half billion years, an abundance of life.⁶⁹⁹

However, Rolston translates the struggle of nature into theological language that is reminiscent of Hinton:

Before there was culture and human redemption, the way of natural history was already a *via dolorosa*. Since the beginning, myriad creatures have been giving up their lives as a ransom for many. In that sense, Jesus is not the exception to the natural order but a chief exemplification of it. The secret of life is seen now to lie not so much in heredity molecules, or in natural selection and the survival of the fittest, or in life's informational, cybernetic learning. The secret of life is that it is a passion play. This is the labor of divinity, and it is misperceived if seen only as selfish genes or red tooth and claw. The view here is not panglossian; it is a tragic view of life, but one in which tragedy is the shadow of prolific creativity. That is the case, and the biological sciences with their evolutionary history can be brought to support this view, although neither tragedy nor creativity is part of their ordinary vocabulary.

Toward the conclusion of the article, Rolston quotes Loren Eiseley's The Immense Journey. The quotation echoes the sentiment of James Hinton. "I would say that if 'dead' matter has reared up this curious landscape of fiddling crickets, song sparrows, and wondering men, it must be plain even to the most devoted materialist that matter of which he speaks contains amazing, if not dreadful powers, and may possibly be . . . 'but one mask of many worn by the Great Face behind.'"⁷⁰⁰ Therefore, Rolston and Eiseley are

⁶⁹⁹ Rolston, 289f.

⁷⁰⁰ Cited by Rolston, 300; Loren Eiseley, The Immense Journey (New York: Vintage Books, 1957): 210.

suggestive of the intersections between Hinton and Darwin without natural theology's probation and contrivances of super-abundant beneficence.

Conclusion

James Hinton began his philosophical speculations using Kant and Hegel to look beyond the mere appearance of nature. Hinton speculates that behind the suffering in the world one can discover God at work. Ultimately, Hinton admits that the noumenal gap is unbridgeable, but his epistemological and metaphysical speculations eventually become ethical concerns relating to the suffering that he saw in society. Hinton's altruistic ethic recognizes the inherent troubles in natural theology. As much as Galileo had set people free from the Earth as the center of the universe, Hinton saw in Darwin a release from the utilitarian ethics of vitalism and natural theology. While Darwin was personally unable to translate the suffering of natural selection into his own theology because of his residual acceptance of natural theology's super-abundance of beneficence, we considered Rolston's "cruciform creation" as an exemplar of combining Darwin's natural selection with a religious outlook reminiscent of Hinton. In the next chapter, we will explore contemporary, interdisciplinary writings in medicine and the social sciences concerning pain to see what of Hinton's understanding of pain intelligibly prevails in our modern age of medicine.

CHAPTER FOUR

HINTON'S THEOLOGY OF PAIN IN LIGHT OF MODERN MEDECINE AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

Hinton posits that one's theological outlook can affect how an individual perceives pain. In this chapter, we will explore contemporary interdisciplinary writings in medicine and the social sciences concerning pain to see what of Hinton's understanding of pain intelligibly prevails. We shall begin the chapter with a brief review of major developments in pain theory to show that newer approaches increasingly connect pain perception to social and psychological factors. However, contrary to much of the historical analysis on pain theory, we will note that most of the major contributors in the history of pain theory allowed room for the psychological influence on pain perception. We shall then examine relevant studies that consider the role of spirituality in pain perception. While some theological approaches to pain have negative implications for pain perception, some theological approaches positively influence pain tolerance and the quality of life of the individual sufferer. Hinton's theology concerning pain aligns with the forms of spirituality that positively influence pain tolerance for individual sufferers.

I. Major Developments in Modern Pain Theory

The major advance in modern pain theory is the recognition that the experience of pain encompasses more than specific nervous response to noxious stimuli. To appreciate this advance in pain theory, we shall begin with Descartes who posited the role of the nervous system on the human perception of pain. We will then consider developments in the Cartesian model put forward by Johannes Müller and Max von Frey, the father of the

specificity theory of pain. Alfred Goldscheider offered an alternative to von Frey's specificity theory in his summation theory of pain perception. While scholars tend to see the contributions of Descartes, Müller, von Frey and Goldscheider as ignoring the psychological aspects of pain, we will note that each of these authors left room for psychological pain modulation. We will next consider the contributions of Henry Knowles Beecher and Dame Cicely Saunders. Their writings articulate the social and psychological factors that influence pain perception. Finally, we will consider a physiological understanding of pain that accounts for the social and psychological factors that influence pain perception developed by Melzack and Wall in 1965, the gate control theory of pain. They gave a physiological explanation of pain that made room for social-psychological factors contributing to perception of pain.

We shall begin our study concerning the major developments in modern pain theory with René Descartes. Descartes' interest in developing a natural philosophy led him to associate with medical practitioners and to perform anatomical studies on animals during his stay in Amsterdam beginning in 1629.⁷⁰¹ While published posthumously in 1662, Descartes' *L'Homme* comes from the same period between 1629 and 1633 as his anatomical studies.⁷⁰² Thus, Descartes' *L'Homme* for its time contains an anatomically enlightened understanding of the human body that articulates the role of nerves in the perception of pain. A passage commonly cited in pain literature reflecting Descartes anatomical studies describes the nervous system's response to fire.

⁷⁰¹ Geneviève Rodis-Lewis, Descartes: His Life and Thought (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1998), 84f.

⁷⁰² Cf. Stephen Gaukroger, Descartes: An Intellectual Biography (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 211f.

Thus, for example, if fire *A* is close to foot *B*, the tiny parts of this fire (which, as you know, move about very rapidly) have the power also to move the area of skin which they touch. In this way they pull the tiny fibre *cc* which you see attached to it, and simultaneously open the entrance to the pore *de*, located opposite the point where the fibre terminates – just as when you pull one end of a string, you cause a bell hanging at the other end to ring at the same time.⁷⁰³

A woodcut accompanying the text shows a boy next to a fire (labeled *A*). From the boy's foot (labeled *B*) to his brain (labeled *F*) runs a fiber. The fiber (labeled *c*) represents the nerves and spinal cord and terminates at the brain via a pore (labeled *de*).⁷⁰⁴ Gilmartin says, "Descartes proposed a 'straight through' transmission of pain, referred to as the 'bell pull' analogy since it described a signal which travelled from the area of stimulus up the spinal cord to the brain, thereby resulting in sensation."⁷⁰⁵ However, Grant Duncan argues that Descartes theory of pain is more complex than the "bell pull" analogy. Duncan says, "One can at least say with certainty that the mind-body relationship conceived by Descartes does not totally rule out psychosomatic theories of health and illness."⁷⁰⁶ In the *Principles of Philosophy*, Descartes says, "But the fact that we feel a pain as it were in our foot does not make it certain that the pain exists outside our mind, in the foot any more than the fact that we see light as it were in the sun, makes it certain

⁷⁰³ René Descartes, *The Philosophical Writings of Descartes, Volume 1*, trans. by John Cottingham, Robert Stoothoff and Dugald Murdoch (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 101.

⁷⁰⁴ Cf. Descartes, *Philosophical Writings*, 102.

⁷⁰⁵ Jo Gilmartin, *Health Psychology in Context* (Chichester, West Sussex: Wiley Publishing, 2009), 60.

⁷⁰⁶ Grant Duncan, "Mind-Body Dualism and the Biopsychosocial Model of Pain: What Did Descartes Really Say?" *Journal of Medicine and Philosophy* 25, no. 4 (2000), 491 of 485-513.

the light exists outside us, in the sun.”⁷⁰⁷ Later, in the same work, Descartes argues that the soul’s sensory awareness resides in the brain. One of his proofs for this assertion is phantom limb pain.

A girl with a seriously infected hand used to have her eyes bandaged whenever the surgeon visited her, to prevent her being upset by the surgical instruments. After a few days, her arm was amputated at the elbow because of creeping gangrene, and wads of bandages were put in its place so that she was quite unaware that she had lost her arm. However, she continued to complain of pains, now in one then in another finger of the amputated hand. The only possible reason for this is that the nerves which used to go from the brain down to the hand now terminated in the arm near the elbow, and were being agitated by the same sorts of motion as must previously have been set up in the hand, so as to produce in the soul, residing in the brain the sensations of pain in this or that finger. (And this shows clearly that pain in the hand is felt by the soul not because it is present in the hand but because present in the brain.)⁷⁰⁸

While Descartes strongly emphasizes the role of the nerves in the perception of pain, he also to a less extent allows for the influence of the brain on the perception of pain. In *The Passions of the Soul*, he says that “the soul, in becoming extremely attentive to something else, can keep from hearing a little noise or feeling a little pain, but cannot in the same way keep from hearing thunder or feeling the fire of the burning hand.”⁷⁰⁹ Thus, Descartes allows for a minimal amount of pain modulation via the thought processes, and

⁷⁰⁷ René Descartes, *Philosophical Writings, Vol. I*, 217.

⁷⁰⁸ René Descartes, *Philosophical Writings, Vol. I*, 283f.

⁷⁰⁹ René Descartes, *The Passions of the Soul*, trans. by Stephen Voss (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Company, 1989), 44.

the characterization of Descartes as purely mechanistic in his theory of pain is misleading.

Johannes Müller (1801-1858) further enhanced the understanding of pain by emphasizing the specialization of nerve fibers for producing various sensations. He says, “The sensation of sound, therefore, is the peculiar ‘energy’ or ‘quality’ of the auditory nerve; the sensation of light and colors that of the optic nerve; and so of the other nerves of sense.”⁷¹⁰ Pain as a sensation is peculiar to the nerves of feeling.⁷¹¹ Müller also demonstrated “that the dorsal roots of spinal nerves (those initially heading upward along the back) carry mainly sensory fibers, whereas the ventral ones (those initially heading downward toward the belly) carry mainly motor fibers.”⁷¹² Modern writers about pain tend to interpret Müller’s contribution in a unidirectional way. Loeser says, “Müller’s concept was that the somesthetic sensations are a function of a unitary straight-through system that conveys information from the sensory organ to the brain center responsible for sensation.”⁷¹³ However, Müller leaves room for the influence of the mind on the experience of pain.

The mind also has a remarkable power of exciting sensations in the nerves of common sensibility; just as the thought of the nauseous excites sometimes the sensation of nausea, so the idea of pain gives rise to the actual sensation of pain in a part predisposed to it . . . If by this is meant that their pains exist in their imagination merely, it is certainly quite incorrect. Pain is never imaginary in this sense; but is as truly pain when

⁷¹⁰ Johannes Müller, Elements of Physiology, Volume II, trans. by William Baly (London: Taylor and Walton, 1842), 1065.

⁷¹¹ Cf. Müller, Elements of Physiology, Volume II, 1061.

⁷¹² Laura Otis, Müller’s Lab (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 11.

⁷¹³ John D. Loeser, Bonica’s Management of Pain (Philadelphia: Lippincott, Williams & Wilkins, 2001, 3rd ed.), 7.

arising, from internal as when from external causes; the idea of pain only can be unattended with sensation, but of the mere idea no one will complain. Still, it is quite certain that the imagination can render pain that already exists more intense, and can excite it when there is a disposition to it.⁷¹⁴

Therefore, Müller is not unidirectional and “straight-through” but allows for the modulation of pain, or the amplification of pain, via the thought processes.

The next contributor to an understanding of pain is Max von Frey (1852-1932). He postulated that four types of receptors exist in the skin to register touch, warmth, cold and pain. Pain sensing receptors are *Schmerzpunkte* or “pain points.” Scholars often blame von Frey for developing “a pain model representing fixed, direct line communication from cutaneous receptors in the skin to the brain” that assumes “a linear, one-to-one relationship between stimulus intensity and pain perception.”⁷¹⁵ However, his inaugural lecture at the University of Leipzig shows that von Frey actually describes the sensory apparatuses as the “gate/door positions” (*Torstellungen*) for the experience of pain.⁷¹⁶ In this lecture, von Frey leaves room for the influence of the mind on the experience of pain. He insists that pain can occur through associative memories: “The memory of the sting follows the image of the needle” (*An das Bild der Nadel heftet sich die Erinnerung des Stiches*).⁷¹⁷ Further, von Frey admits that the experience of pain necessitates a physical and emotional parallelism (*Parallelismus zwischen psychischem*

⁷¹⁴ Müller, *Elements of Physiology, Volume II*, 1332.

⁷¹⁵ Thomas Keller and Elliot Krames, “On the Shoulders of Giants: A History of the Understanding of Pain, Leading to the Understandings of Neuromodulation,” *Neuromodulation: Technology at the Neural Interface* 12, no. 2 (2009): 80 of 77-84.

⁷¹⁶ Max von Frey, *Die Gefühle und ihr Verhältnis zu den Empfindungen* (Leipzig: Edward Besold, 1894), 17.

⁷¹⁷ Von Frey, *Die Gefühle*, 15.

und physischem Geschehen) within the central nervous system (*Centrainervensystems*). Therefore, von Frey raises the understanding of pain from merely *Gemeingefühl* or subjective, common feelings to a complex intermingling between the physical and psychological.⁷¹⁸

Alfred Goldscheider (1858-1935) offers an alternative to von Frey's *Schmerzpunkte* to explain sensory pain. He argues "that the sensation of pain is peculiar to the pressure nerves and the nerves of common feeling (*Gemeingefühlsnerven*)."⁷¹⁹ Thus, Goldscheider rejects the existence of special pain receptors and views pain as occurring due to a summation process in the nervous system responding to the intensity of the stimulus. Finger assesses Goldscheider's theory of pain in the following way:

Although Goldscheider accepted the intensive theory of pain, which held that pain was a result of strong stimuli acting on other types of receptors, he postulated that pain could still have its own pathways and centers. Specifically, he theorized that tactile stimuli could activate a special pain pathway in the spinal grey matter if the stimuli were of sufficiently high intensity. In this respect, Goldscheider was still viewing pain as a sensation and not as an affect or an emotion.⁷²⁰

However, Finger's insistence that Goldscheider ignores the affective or emotional influence upon pain overstates the reality of Goldscheider's position. Goldscheider leaves open the possibility that pain summation can include a "psychological form"

⁷¹⁸ Cf. Andrew Hodgkiss, From Lesion to Metaphor: Chronic Pain in British, French and German Medical Writings (Amsterdam: Rodopi B.V., 2000), 75.

⁷¹⁹ Cited by G. W. A. Luckey, "Some Recent Studies on Pain," American Journal of Psychology VII, no. 1 (1895): 120 of 108-123.

⁷²⁰ Stanley Finger, Origins of Neuroscience: A History of Explorations in Brain Science (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994), 150f.

(*psychischer Art*).⁷²¹ He also discusses that the experience of pain increases due to “fixation of the attention” (*Fixieren der Aufmerksamkeit*),⁷²² “the fluctuation of attention” (*das Schwanken der Aufmerksamkeit*),⁷²³ “the lack of distraction” (*den Mangel an Zerstreung*), and “that real pain depends on mental influences” (*dass auch der echte Schmerz von psychischen Einflüssen abhängig ist*).⁷²⁴ Goldscheider’s summation theory of pain does not exclude psychological factors influencing pain perception.

While contemporary authors tend to view the contributions of Descartes, Müller, von Frey and Goldscheider as overly emphasizing the role of the nerves in pain perception, our consideration of each of these early theoreticians of pain shows that each allows for the modulation of pain to some extent by psychological factors. However, the insights of Henry Knowles Beecher (1904-1976) working with wounded soldiers during World War II and Dame Cicely Saunders (1918-2005) working among the terminally ill brought the psychosocial factors of pain perception to the forefront.

Before World War II, Henry Knowles Beecher was an accomplished anesthesiologist becoming the first endowed professor of physiology at Harvard and founding the world’s first anesthesia research institute.⁷²⁵ In latter years, he led the call for ethical standards in medical research on human subjects.⁷²⁶ However, for our purposes in this chapter, Beecher’s insights into pain arising from his experience of caring for wounded soldiers in Italy and France is of special importance. Beecher began

⁷²¹ Alfred Goldscheider, *Ueber den Schmerz in physiologischer und klinischer Hinsicht* (Berlin: August Hirschwald, 1894), 21.

⁷²² Goldscheider, 42.

⁷²³ Goldscheider, 42.

⁷²⁴ Goldscheider, 55.

⁷²⁵ Jonathan Moreno, *Undue Risk: Secret State Experiments on Humans* (New York: Routledge, 2001), 241.

⁷²⁶ Moreno, 240.

tracking soldiers' needs for morphine during the Italian battles at Venafro, Cassino, and Anzio.⁷²⁷ Of two hundred fifteen wounded soldiers who remained conscious, he found that only fifty-eight of the men requested pain relief therapy.⁷²⁸ Beecher, surprised by his findings, speculates:

Three-quarters of badly wounded men, although they have received no morphine for a matter of hours, have so little pain that they do not want pain relief medication, even though the questions raised remind them that such is available for the asking. This is a puzzling thing and perhaps justifies a little speculation. It is remembered that these data were obtained entirely from wounded soldiers. A comparison with the results of civilian accidents would be of interest. While the family automobile in a crash can cause wounds that mimic many of the lesions of warfare, it is not at all certain that the incidence of pain would be the same in the two groups. Pain is an experience subject to modification by many factors: wounds received during strenuous exercise, during the excitement of games, often go unnoticed. The same is true of wounds received during fighting, during anger. Strong emotion can block pain. That is common experience. In this connection, it is important to consider the position of the soldier: His wound suddenly releases him from an exceedingly dangerous environment, one filled with fatigue, discomfort, anxiety, fear and real danger of death, and gives him a ticket to the safety of the hospital. His troubles are about over, or he thinks they are . . . Whether this actually reduces the pain remains unproved. On the other hand, the civilian's accident marks the beginning of disaster for him. It is impossible to say whether this produces an increased awareness of his pain, increased suffering; possibly it does.⁷²⁹

⁷²⁷ Henry Knowles Beecher, "Pain in Men Wounded in Battle," Annals of Surgery 123, no. 1 (1946): 96 of 96-105.

⁷²⁸ Beecher, "Pain in Men," 98.

⁷²⁹ Beecher, "Pain in Men," 99.

In 1956, Beecher again published on the subject of the difference between civilians and soldiers in the experience of pain.⁷³⁰ By matching similar injuries between civilians and the soldiers that he had treated, he concluded, “the intensity of suffering is largely determined by what the pain means to the patient,”⁷³¹ and “the extent of wound bears only a slight relationship, if any (often none at all), to the pain experienced.”⁷³² Beecher formulated a theory of pain with two principle components including “perception (the original sensation) and reaction (the psychic processing of the original sensation).”⁷³³ Beecher brought the role of pain modulation via psychological influence to the forefront for medicine.

From a different vantage than Beecher, Dame Cicely Saunders ideas about pain came from interactions with terminal patients. She launched the modern hospice movement with the founding of St. Christopher’s Hospice in 1967.⁷³⁴ Two major experiences shaped her thinking about pain. Firstly, while working as a medical almoner in 1947, she encountered David Tasma, a Jewish patient who had survived the Warsaw ghetto and was now dying alone in London of cancer of the rectum.⁷³⁵ Saunders’

⁷³⁰ Henry Knowles Beecher, “Relationship of Significance of Wound to Pain Experienced,” Journal of the American Medical Association 161, no. 17 (1956): 1609-1613.

⁷³¹ Beecher, “Relationship of Significance,” 1609.

⁷³² Beecher, “Relationship of Significance,” 1612.

⁷³³ Henry Knowles Beecher, “The Measurement of Pain: Prototype for the Quantitative Study of Subjective Responses,” Pharmacological Reviews 9, no. 1 (1957): 178 of 59-209.

⁷³⁴ Diane Meier, “The Development, Status, and Future of Palliative Care,” Palliative Care: Transforming the care of Serious Illness, Ed. Diane Meier, Stephen Isaacs and Robert Hughes (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2010), 17.

⁷³⁵ Cicely Saunders, “The Evolution of Palliative Care,” Patient Education and Counselling 41 (2000):7f. of 7 -13.

conversations with David explored his disappointments with life and the need for a place “which would help people in his predicament; somewhere more suited to the need for symptom control and, above all, where there was a chance to come to terms with the situation more easily than in a busy surgical ward.”⁷³⁶ David Tasma bequeathed £500 to Saunders saying, “I will be a window in your Home.”⁷³⁷ The experience convinced Saunders of the need for a place where “people should be helped not only to die peacefully, but to live until they die with their needs and their potential met as fully as possible.”⁷³⁸ According to Saunders, “David Tasma, the Polish Jew who thought he made no impact on the world by his life, started a movement.”⁷³⁹ Secondly, in caring for terminal patients, Saunders encountered a woman in 1963 that helped her understand that pain encompasses the whole person. When Saunders asked the woman to describe her pain, she said, “Well doctor, it began in my back but now it seems that all of me is wrong.”⁷⁴⁰ Continued conversation with this patient showed Saunders that the woman was talking not merely about physical pain but also about emotional, social and spiritual needs. Saunders developed the idea of “total pain” which encompasses “physical, emotional and social pain and the spiritual need for security, meaning and self-worth.”⁷⁴¹ Thus, Saunders’ careful listening to patients allowed her to develop an understanding of “total pain” that recognizes the holistic experience of the individual and its impact on their experience of pain.

⁷³⁶ Saunders, “Evolution of Palliative Care,” 7f.

⁷³⁷ Saunders, “Evolution of Palliative Care,” 8.

⁷³⁸ Saunders, “Evolution of Palliative Care,” 8.

⁷³⁹ Saunders, “Evolution of Palliative Care,” 8.

⁷⁴⁰ Saunders, “Evolution of Palliative Care,” 9.

⁷⁴¹ Saunders, “Evolution of Palliative Care,” 9.

While clinicians like Beecher and Saunders recognized the fact that social and psychological factors influence pain perception, a physiological explanation for the phenomenon was lacking until Ronald Melzack and Patrick Wall formulated the gate control theory of pain in 1965. Their theory allowed for central summation, physiological specialization and central control over afferent input.⁷⁴² In short, they were giving a physiological explanation that embraced the best of specificity theory and summation theory while accounting for psychological modulation in the experience of pain.

Stimulation of the skin evokes nerve impulses that are transmitted to three spinal cord systems: the cells of the substantia gelatinosa in the dorsal horn, the dorsal column fibers that project toward the brain, the first central transmission (T) cells in the dorsal horn. We propose that (i) the substantia gelatinosa functions as a gate control system that modulates the afferent patterns before they influence T cells; (ii) the afferent patterns in the dorsal column system act, in part at least, as a central control trigger which activates selective brain processes that influence the modulating properties of the gate control system; and (iii) the T cells activate neural mechanisms which comprise the action system responsible for response and perception. Our theory proposes that pain phenomena are determined by interactions among these three systems.⁷⁴³

For our purposes, the importance of the gate control theory of pain is that it gives a physiological explanation for how pain modulation via the brain occurs. “Thus it is possible for central nervous system activities subserving attention, emotion, and memories of prior experience to exert control over sensory input. There is evidence to

⁷⁴² Ronald Melzack and Patrick Wall, “Pain Mechanisms: A New Theory,” Science 150, no. 3699 (1965): 974 of 971-979.

⁷⁴³ Melzack and Wall, “Pain Mechanisms,” 974.

suggest that these central influences are mediated through the gate control system.”⁷⁴⁴

The impact of the theory put forward by Melzack and Wall on pain study is enormous.

John Loeser says,

This theory led directly to the attempt to reduce pain by non-noxious afferent input, such as transcutaneous electrical nerve stimulation and spinal cord stimulation with implanted electrical devices. It also paved the way for research on peripheral nociceptive mechanisms and dorsal horn synaptic mechanisms that could be influenced by medications. Drugs were studied, developed, and marketed that could alter downstream modulation of dorsal horn information processing. The gate hypothesis also led to the realization that pain behaviors were influenced by affective and environmental events and that psychological strategies could be used to help reduce the impact of noxious stimulation on a person’s cognitive and affective processes. This key theory led to the realization that a biosychosocial approach to pain was more effective than the traditional biomedical concepts of pain being a genetically determined response of the brain to noxious events.⁷⁴⁵

While some of the anatomical aspects of the gate theory have been refined, the theory’s basic contribution that pain involves both transmission and modulation of nociceptive signals endures.⁷⁴⁶

Our exploration of the developments of modern pain theory shows a growing appreciation that the experience of pain encompasses more than specific nervous responses to noxious stimuli. While Descartes, Müller, von Frey and Goldscheider

⁷⁴⁴ Melzack and Wall, “Pain Mechanisms,” 976.

⁷⁴⁵ John Loeser, “The Current Issues in Pain Management,” Current Diagnosis & Treatment of Pain, ed. Jamie Von Roenn, Judith Paice & Michael Preodor (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2006), 1.

⁷⁴⁶ Sarah Coakley Kay Kaufman Shelemay, Pain and Its Transformations: The Interface of Biology and Culture (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2007), 7.

focused on the nervous response, they variously allowed room for the influence of the brain upon pain perception. Each of these authors left room for the psychological modulation of pain. However, Henry Knowles Beecher and Dame Cicely Saunders brought a greater focus on the social and psychological factors that influence pain perception, but their observations lacked an anatomical explanation for how the brain influences pain perception. Finally, we considered the physiological understanding of pain that accounts for social and psychological factors developed by Melzack and Wall in 1965. Their gate control theory of pain gave a physiological explanation of pain that made room for social-psychological factors contributing to perception of pain. We must now turn to examine what modern research says about the relationship of spirituality to the experience of pain.

II. Spirituality and Pain in Modern Research

Medical research on the relationship between spirituality and pain presents a complex picture.⁷⁴⁷ We will now consider three insights of contemporary research on the relationship between pain and spirituality. First, we will consider the general finding that religious/spiritual coping increases with illness and pain. Second, we will examine some research that indicates that spirituality can increase pain tolerance. Third, modern studies reveal that not all forms of religious/spiritual coping are equal. While some forms of religious / spiritual coping contribute to pain intensification and negative health outcomes, other forms show a positive impact on health outcomes. We will differentiate the positive and negative forms of religious /spiritual coping so that we can conclude this

⁷⁴⁷ Cf. Christopher Ellison and Jeffrey Levin, “The Religion-Health Connection: Evidence, Theory and Future Directions,” Health Education & Behavior 25, no. 6 (1998): 700-719.

chapter with a reflection on Hinton's theology of pain as a positive form of religious / spiritual coping with the problem of pain.

Coping with pain and illness generally increases interest in religion and spirituality. One Canadian study reports,

The population with chronic pain and fatigue contains more individuals who are spiritual without being religious, and who, as a group, use prayer to cope more than the general population. The finding is consistent with a tendency to seek spiritual support during time of illness and to pray for health related concerns.⁷⁴⁸

Pargament, Koenig and Perez make a similar observation: "Among some groups, particularly the elderly, minorities, and individuals facing life-threatening crises, religion is cited more frequently than any other resource for coping."⁷⁴⁹ In a study of Rheumatoid Arthritis patients, Francis Keefe and associates make the following assertion based on the positive religious coping techniques and spiritual experiences of their study population.

Taken together, these findings are interesting and suggest that spirituality and positive approaches to religious/spiritual coping may be an important and common part of the experience of living with arthritis pain. One might expect that people coping with chronic illness or chronic pain might find it difficult to maintain a positive outlook or feel connected to God or the beauty of life. The results of this study suggest otherwise. The findings lend support to the possibility that coping with a chronically

⁷⁴⁸ Marilyn Baetz and Rudy Bowen, "Chronic Pain and Fatigue: Association with Religion and Spirituality," Journal of the Canadian Pain Society 13, no. 5 (2008): 385 of 383-388.

⁷⁴⁹ Kenneth Pargament, Harold Koenig, and Lisa Perez, "The Many Methods of Religious Coping: Development and Initial Validation of the RCOPE," Journal of Clinical Psychology 56, no. 4 (2000): 520 of 519-543.

painful medical condition may sensitize one or even enhance spiritual or religious connectedness.⁷⁵⁰

Why does illness and pain increase the use of religious/spiritual coping mechanisms? A meta-analysis of the literature connecting religion and health shows that the research tends to occur in populations statistically dominated by Christians.⁷⁵¹ “The non-Christians in samples studied to date are not excluded from analysis; there simply are not enough of them to know if the effects of religion on health are similar for Christians and non-Christians.”⁷⁵² Thus, illness and pain tend to return people to the religious practices of coping for which they are most familiar. George, Ellison, and Larson suggest that these religious practices tend to promote better health practices, social support, psychosocial resources of self-esteem and self-efficacy, and a sense of coherence and meaning.⁷⁵³

Since experiences of pain and illness tend to increase forms of religious coping, is there evidence that religious coping effects pain perception? The research of Amy Wachholtz and Kenneth Pargament suggests that spiritual meditation practices can increase pain tolerance over secular forms of meditation.⁷⁵⁴ They recruited college

⁷⁵⁰ Francis J. Keefe, et al, “Living with Rheumatoid Arthritis: The Role of Daily Spirituality and Daily Religious and Spiritual Coping,” Journal of Pain 2, no.2 (2001): 107 of 101-110.

⁷⁵¹ Linda George, Christopher Ellison, and David Larson, “Explaining the Relationships Between Religious Involvement and Health,” Psychological Inquiry 13, no. 3 (2002): 190-200.

⁷⁵² George, Ellison and Larson, 197.

⁷⁵³ George, Ellison and Larson, 192ff.

⁷⁵⁴ Amy Wachholtz and Kenneth Pargament, “Is Spirituality a Critical Ingredient of Meditation? Comparing the Effects of Spiritual Meditation, Secular Meditation, and Relaxation on Spiritual, Psychological, Cardiac, and Pain Outcomes,” Journal of Behavioral Medicine 28, no. 4 (2005): 369-384

students to participate in the study to see if adding a spiritual component to meditation makes an impact. The researchers randomly assigned students into mediation groups including a spiritual meditation group, a secular meditation group, and a relaxation group. Students in the spiritual meditation group spent twenty minutes per day for two weeks meditating on a phrase from the following options: “God is peace,” “God is joy,” “Good is good,” and “God is love.”⁷⁵⁵ The secular meditation group focused on phrases including “I am content,” “I am joyful,” “I am good,” and “I am happy.”⁷⁵⁶ The relaxation control group did not use phrases but were to practice relaxing physically and to avoid focusing on stressful things.⁷⁵⁷ Researchers measured participants’ psychological and physical reactions through a Cold Pressor task in combination with survey instruments.⁷⁵⁸

In general, the Spiritual Meditation group reported lower anxiety, more positive mood, and greater spirituality. Furthermore, this group displayed an ability to withstand pain for longer periods of time than the other two groups. On most of the variables examined, the Secular Meditation and Relaxation groups were not significantly different from each other.⁷⁵⁹

In a similar study conducted with migraine headache sufferers, Wachholtz and Pargament discovered that “those who practiced spiritual meditation had greater decreases in frequency of migraine headaches, anxiety, and negative affect, as well as greater increase in pain tolerance, headache-related self-efficacy, daily spiritual experiences, and existential well being.”⁷⁶⁰ From the research of Wachholtz and Pargament, we can

⁷⁵⁵ Wachholtz and Pargament, “Spirituality,” 375.

⁷⁵⁶ Wachholtz and Pargament, “Spirituality,” 375.

⁷⁵⁷ Wachholtz and Pargament, “Spirituality,” 375.

⁷⁵⁸ Wachholtz and Pargament, “Is Spirituality,” 374.

⁷⁵⁹ Wachholtz and Pargament, “Is Spirituality,” 378 -380.

⁷⁶⁰ Amy Wachholtz and Kenneth Pargament, “Migraines and meditation: Does Spirituality Matter?” Journal of Behavioral Medicine 31, no. 4 (2008): 351 of 351-366.

conclude that spiritual/religious coping techniques can positively influence an individual's experience of pain. However, the research in the field also indicates that some forms of religious coping can have negative health consequences. We must now examine the inequality of religious coping techniques.

Modern studies reveal that not all forms of religious/spiritual coping are equal. While some forms of religious coping are positive and promote better health practices, social support, psychosocial resources, and a sense of coherence and meaning, others can be negative and promote a sense of abandonment, isolation, resentment or avoidance. Pargament and colleagues identify warning signs or "red flags" indicating "problems in the involvements of religion in coping."⁷⁶¹ The most significant "red flags" include religious apathy, God's punishment, anger at God and conflict with one's religious system.⁷⁶² Expressions of these dimensions of coping "related to poorer mental health and event-related outcomes."⁷⁶³ In contrast, positive religious coping involves "seeking spiritual support, seeking a spiritual connection, collaboration with God in problem solving, religious forgiveness, and benevolent religious appraisals of the illness."⁷⁶⁴

Other studies with patient populations suggest the general accuracy that negative religious coping mechanisms are less beneficial to health outcomes. Elizabeth

⁷⁶¹ Kenneth Pargament, et al, "Red Flags and Religious Coping: Identifying Some Religious Warning Signs among People in Crises," Journal of Clinical Psychology 59, no. 12 (2003): 1339 of 1335-1348.

⁷⁶² Pargament, et al, "Red Flags," 1345.

⁷⁶³ Pargament, et al, "Red Flags," 1345.

⁷⁶⁴ Kenneth Pargament, Harold Koenig, Nalini Tarakeshwar and June Hahn, "Religious Struggle as a Predictor of Mortality Among Medically Ill Elderly Patients," Archives of Internal Medicine, 161, no. 15 (2001): 1882 of 1881-1885.

Rippentrop and colleagues studied 122 chronic musculoskeletal pain patients' responses to surveys on religion/spirituality and health outcomes.⁷⁶⁵

Chronic pain patients who find it difficult to forgive, feel punished and abandoned by God, lack daily spiritual experiences, do not experience support from a religious community, and do not consider themselves religious/spiritual, may be at greater risk for compromised mental health. It is especially noteworthy that of the religious/spiritual subsections able to predict variance in mental health, two of them involved potentially negative behaviors. Lack of forgiveness and engaging in negative religious coping seem to contribute to poor mental health and higher pain intensity.⁷⁶⁶

In another study conducted among patients with HIV/AIDS, Trevino and colleagues found distinct differences between patients using positive or negative coping techniques.⁷⁶⁷ They report their findings as follows:

Consistent with our hypotheses, cross-sectional analyses showed that positive religious coping was associated with positive outcomes, including greater self-esteem and spirituality. Spiritual struggle was associated with negative outcomes, such as poorer quality of life, higher levels of HIV symptoms, and higher levels of depressive symptoms. In addition, the longitudinal analyses indicated that participants scoring relatively high on positive religious coping reported improvements in well-being over time

⁷⁶⁵ Elizabeth Rippentrop, et al, "The Relationship between Religion/Spirituality and Physical Health, Mental Health, and Pain in a Chronic Pain Population," *Pain* 116, (2005): 311-321.

⁷⁶⁶ Rippentrop, et al, 319.

⁷⁶⁷ Kelly M. Trevino, et al, "Religious Coping and Physiological, Psychological, Social, and Spiritual Outcomes in Patients with HIV/AIDS: Cross-Sectional and Longitudinal Findings," *AIDS and Behavior* 14 (2010): 379-389.

whereas participants scoring high on spiritual struggle reported declines over time, even when controlling for demographic variables.⁷⁶⁸

A word of caution is necessary when considering these findings on health outcomes. While the studies find linkages between positive forms of religious coping with positive health outcomes and negative forms of religious coping with negative health outcomes, Harold Koenig rightly says, “Modest to moderately high intercorrelations have been found among various religious coping scales suggesting that people make use of religious coping methods in some combination with each other.”⁷⁶⁹ The studies we have considered show a tendency for negative religious coping to have negative health consequences. People who suffer might ask if God has abandoned them. The danger to health seems to be when people are stuck in their use of negative coping techniques.

Before concluding with an examination of how Hinton’s theology of pain fits into our consideration of the relationship between spirituality and modern pain research, we need to consider what the research says about attitudes toward helping others.

Wachholtz, Pearce and Koenig list helping others as a form of positive religious/spiritual coping. They say, “Positive R/S coping includes collaborative problem solving with God, helping others in need, and seeking spiritual support from the community and

⁷⁶⁸ Trevino, 386f.

⁷⁶⁹ Harold George Koenig, Handbook of Religion and Mental Health (San Diego: Academic Press, 1998), 121.

higher power.”⁷⁷⁰ In a qualitative study of HIV-positive individuals, Reeves, Merriam and Courtenay substantiate the role of helping others as a successful coping strategy.⁷⁷¹

Altruism was the most prevalent coping strategy used by participants. From the humble statement, “I want to make a difference,” by Tim to Steve’s more eloquent, “I want to just hold a candle to where maybe somebody two steps behind me can make it to that point and then perhaps go a couple more steps if I can’t go,” participants repeatedly voiced their desire to help others. Scott described how coping with the recent death of his partner (from AIDS), as well as with his own HIV positive status, uniquely positions him to help others: “I’m able to help so many people, not just with HIV but in regular families where there is a death occurring, where no one wants to talk about it, no one wants to do anything. I can walk right in and be very comfortable in it.”⁷⁷²

Another study links altruistic behaviors with higher levels of mental health in a random sample of church attendees across the United States.⁷⁷³ The authors say, “The act of giving to someone else may have mental health benefits because the very nature of focusing outside the self counters the self-focused nature of anxiety and depression.”⁷⁷⁴

Stephen Post summarizes the research on the benefits of altruism by saying,

Altruism results in deeper and more positive social integration, distraction from personal problems and the anxiety of self-preoccupation, enhanced

⁷⁷⁰ Amy Wachholtz, Michelle Pearce and Harold Koenig, “Exploring the Relationship between Spirituality, Coping, and Pain,” Journal of Behavioral Medicine 30, no. 4 (2007): 313f. of 311-318.

⁷⁷¹ Patricia Reeves, Sharan Merriam, and Bradley Courtenay, “Adaption to HIV Infection: The Development of Coping Strategies Over Time,” Qualitative Health Research 9, no. 3 (1999): 344-361.

⁷⁷² Reeves, Merriam and Courtenay, 353f.

⁷⁷³ Carolyn Schwartz, et al, “Altruistic Social Interest Behaviors Are Associated with Better Mental Health,” Psychosomatic Medicine 65, no. 5 (2003): 778-794.

⁷⁷⁴ Schwartz, et al, 783.

meaning and purpose as related to well-being, a more active lifestyle that counters cultural pressures toward isolated passivity, and the presence of positive emotions such as kindness that displace harmful negative emotional states. It is entirely plausible, then, to assert that altruism enhances mental and physical health.⁷⁷⁵

The one caveat to altruism's beneficial nature is the problem of individuals overexerting themselves in their attempt to help others.⁷⁷⁶

Conclusion: Hinton's Theology of Pain in Light of Modern Pain Literature

We have explored the development of modern pain theories and the literature on the role of religious/spiritual coping on pain and illness to see if Hinton's theology of pain remains intelligible. I would suggest that Hinton's nexus of pain, beneficence and deification is quite viable in light of this literature. The literature that we have explored in this chapter substantiates the idea that one's theological conceptualization influences how one perceives pain and illness. Further, Hinton's emphasis on deification promotes a collaborative approach to pain in which the sufferer sees him/herself working to accomplish divine ends. As the health literature reveals, a spiritually collaborative model is a form of positive religious coping linked to better health outcomes. Hinton's concept of conceptualizing one's pain as serving others is also a positive religious coping technique. Finally, our exploration of the history of pain theories also suggests that psychosocial factors affect pain tolerance. We noted that all the theorists allowed room for the modulation of pain via the thought processes. Hinton posits that one's theological outlook can affect how an individual perceives pain. The modern medical and social

⁷⁷⁵ Stephen G. Post, "Altruism, and Health: It's Good to Be Good," International Journal of Behavioral Medicine 12, no.2 (2005): 70 of 66-77.

⁷⁷⁶ Schwartz, et al, 779; cf. Post, 66.

science literature seems to bear out Hinton's basic premise that theological outlook can influence one's tolerance of pain.

A THEOLOGICAL POSTSCRIPT

Franz Kafka begins The Metamorphosis with one of the most startling lines in literature: “As Gregor Samsa awoke one morning out of restless dreams, he found himself in bed transformed into a gargantuan pest.”⁷⁷⁷ According to Rita Charon and her collaborators, Samsa’s transformation into an insect “is an allegory of the many-leveled transformations of illness for patients and their families and clinicians.”⁷⁷⁸ Michael Rowe also reads the The Metamorphosis from the perspective of illness: “Illness threatens not only the individual’s physical integrity but also the individual’s identity and sense of self in the world.”⁷⁷⁹ Those who suffer find themselves searching for meaning. Our study of Hinton’s theology of pain suggests some theological possibilities that might help the individual sufferer to move from meaninglessness and despair but also calls for a social perspective that advocates for systemic structures of care for those who suffer. In this postscript, I would like to explore three key conclusions using Kafka’s idea of metamorphosis in relation to our study of Hinton’s theology of pain.

First, our study of Hinton calls for a metamorphosis of how one perceives the suffering individual. Far from being something akin to an insect, Hinton imbues the sufferer with the divine image. Our exploration of the Jewish and Christian traditions supports Hinton in this divine metamorphosis while challenging his unidirectional perspective. Deification does not simply occur as a result of embracing suffering to benefit others. In the biblical tradition the nexus of suffering, deification and beneficence

⁷⁷⁷ Franz Kafka, The Metamorphosis, translated by M.A. Roberts (Clayton, Delaware: Prestwick House, 2005), 13.

⁷⁷⁸ Rita Charon, et al, “Literature and Medicine: Contributions to Clinical Practice,” Annals of Internal Medicine 122, no. 8 (1995):

⁷⁷⁹ Michael Rowe, “Metamorphosis: Defending the Human,” in Franz Kafka’s The Metamorphosis, ed. Harold Bloom (New York: Infobase Publishing, 2008), 158.

is poly-directional. The significance of this poly-directional nexus is that sickness and pain are not signs of divine disfavor but can become opportunities for experiencing deification as a representative of God's work in the world.

Second, our exploration of Hinton in light of medical research calls for a metamorphosis of the work of theology. Hinton suggests that one's theological outlook can affect how an individual perceives pain. The medical and social science literature substantiates that there are positive and negative religious forms of coping with illness that influence health outcomes. To put it simply, some types of theology are dangerous for health. The research suggests that the most healthful theology promotes a spiritually collaborative outlook. Hinton's emphasis on deification promotes a collaborative approach to pain in which the sufferer sees himself or herself working to accomplish divine ends. Theologians must be aware that their theological writing can have an impact upon the spiritual and physical health of their readers. Darwin serves as an instance where erroneous theology negatively impacts an individual's spiritual development. Darwin's concept of natural selection clashed with his natural theology and led to his agnosticism. His difficulty arises from his persistence in the natural theology idea that happiness super-abounds misery. Despite the fact that he sees the significant role of suffering in natural selection, his natural theology predilection did not allow a theological reformulation that embraces suffering in his belief system.

Third, our exploration of the Hebrew concepts of sacrality and corporality call for a metamorphosis of Hinton's theology of pain. Hinton addresses suffering in The Mystery of Pain only from the vantage of personal experience. However suffering is ultimately a social issue that requires a social, not simply a personal, solution. Theology

must offer more than a mere consolation for pain by exploring issues of society's obligation to care for the sufferer. The American health care crisis is producing a climate where those who suffer without health coverage are objectified as the problem. Similarly, in Kafka's The Metamorphosis, Gregor Samsa's sister, Grete, ultimately objectifies Gregor as a monstrosity and an it: "I will not pronounce the name of my brother in the presence of this monster, and will say merely this about it: we must be rid of it. We have attempted every method humanly possible to serve and tolerate it, and I believe nobody can blame us in the least."⁷⁸⁰ When an individual or society objectifies its problems upon individuals, greater atrocities occur. A theology of pain must consider the social dimensions of suffering and the obligations of society to care for those who suffer. Modern American Christianity would benefit from a reconsideration of the social outlook within the sacral theology of the Hebrew scripture and the social gospel movement of the twentieth century.

⁷⁸⁰ Kafka, The Metamorphosis, 61.

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