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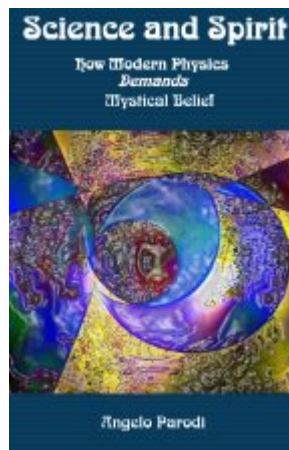
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Science And Spirit



By Angelo Parodi

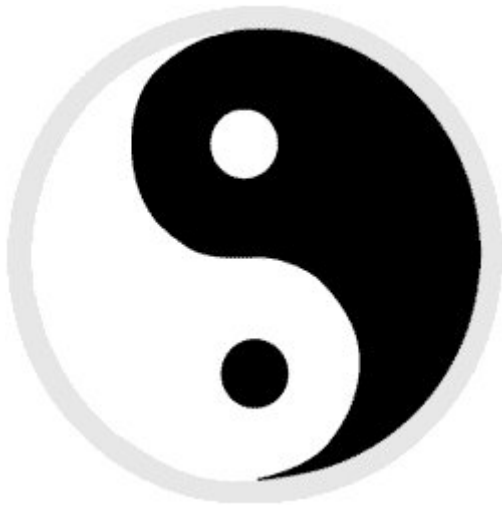
Why Evil Exists

The model established in *Science and Spirit* we've seen how, in Biblical terms, God creates the hosts of heaven, and of course, creates them as blessed beings. They do no evil, because created good, but cannot truly be perfect without surmounting adversity and temptation. Thus, earth and its population are created as a vehicle within which these spirits can be further refined. From our simplistic viewpoint, constrained by the three-dimensional limitations of the material, we perceive this world as having matured over millions of years, and call this evolution. From a wider perspective, unconstrained by time, we

can conceive of how the totality of existence is, in fact, instantaneous, or more properly, totally un-timeable.

So, with this in mind we can ask ourselves what kinds of things would have to be in this material world to properly hone these spirits? Well, we would expect to find love and joy, trials and tribulations, successes and failures, miracles bright and horrors so abysmal as to shatter the senses. Disease, catastrophes, war, famine, and injustice would also be intrinsic components of this environment. Thus, when people wonder why a good God would allow evil things to happen, it's because we really don't understand how things that appear bad to us are actually there to help us attain perfection. Consequently they're not actually bad at all; it's just that we don't know enough to comprehend their value. Inasmuch they serve the divine purpose, they're good, not evil.

The ancient Chinese symbol called the *T'ai-chi T'u*, better known as the 'yin-yang' (see below) exemplifies this concept.



Some people, mainly the most orthodox of fundamentalist Christians, abhor this symbol, mistakenly interpreting it as exalting the dark side in combination with the good. The more enlightened recognize that it simply represents an acknowledgement that all things serve God's purpose, regardless of how they may appear from our limited human perspective. For the Western mind, this concept can be difficult to grasp, but even the most stolid fundamentalists should be familiar with Job 38-41. Here, God chastises Job for presuming to understand things that can only be perceived from the divine perspective. Can even the most literal-minded evangelicals believe that such a thing as evil could exist if God did not will it so, and if it did not serve his purpose?

Here's a quote from *The Urantia Book*, which says it better than I can:

"The uncertainties of life and the vicissitudes of existence do not in any manner contradict the concept of the universal sovereignty of

God. All evolutionary creature life is beset by certain inevitabilities. Consider the following:

"1. Is courage--strength of character--desirable? Then must man be reared in an environment which necessitates grappling with hardships and reacting to disappointments.

"2. Is altruism--service of one's fellows--desirable? Then must life experience provide for encountering situations of social inequality.

"3. Is hope--the grandeur of trust--desirable? Then human existence must constantly be confronted with insecurities and recurrent uncertainties.

"4. Is faith--the supreme assertion of human thought--desirable? Then must the mind of man find itself in that troublesome predicament where it ever knows less than it can believe.

"5. Is the love of truth and the willingness to go wherever it leads, desirable? Then must man grow up in a world where error is present and falsehood always possible.

"6. Is idealism--the approaching concept of the divine--desirable? Then must man struggle in an environment of relative goodness and beauty, surroundings simulative of the irrepressible reach for better things.

"7. Is loyalty--devotion to highest duty--desirable? Then must man carry on amid the possibilities of betrayal and desertion. The valor of devotion to duty consists in the implied danger of default.

"8. Is unselfishness--the spirit of self-forgetfulness--desirable? Then must mortal man live face to face with the incessant clamoring of an inescapable self for recognition and honor. Man could not dynamically choose the divine life if there were no self-life to forsake. Man could never lay saving hold on righteousness if there were no potential evil to exalt and differentiate the good by contrast.

"9. Is pleasure--the satisfaction of happiness--desirable? Then must man live in a world where the alternative of pain and the likelihood of suffering are ever-present experiential possibilities?

"Throughout the universe, every unit is regarded as a part of the whole. Survival of the part is dependent on co-operation with the plan and purpose of the whole, the wholehearted desire and perfect willingness to do the Father's divine will. The only evolutionary world without error (the possibility of unwise judgment) would be a world without free intelligence."

The Urantia Book, 1955, The Urantia Foundation, Chicago, IL.