

# Somewhere, Someone, Or Something

There's a lot to identify with in the parable about the man with two sons. And we will get into it throughout this book. Specifically, how all of us in some way are like the younger son. We have all experienced that place where we ask the questions or make these resolutions,

“How did I get here?”

“Why did this happen?”

“I need to change something.”

There is another story I want to share that will help us understand the disconnect we all have felt within ourselves at some point. This story is written in the form of a poem.

It can be found in ancient Jewish literature and it talks about the things of earth, time and space. It introduces the idea of a god-being and how humankind is a lot like this god. It even goes so far as to explain how each person has meaning and a unique purpose.

There is much to discover in the poem.

There are epic beginnings and prophesied endings. A cosmic battle of dark versus light, and in there are intricate details, beautiful imagery, and world-building. We can read about the mythic explanation of the universe's arch bent toward eternal love and justice.

You would also find the disruption of relationships and why your significant other can never decide on what they want to eat. They tell you to make a choice, and when you do, you get it wrong. Then they say they're not picky and are up for whatever, so you submit another idea and that too gets denied. All of the sudden you find yourself debating about how many times you can wear a pair of jeans before considering them dirty and in need of a wash.

Okay, maybe not all of that is in there, but you have been there, right? Not everything in our relationships is rainbows, candy, and puppies.

This ancient poem outlines the fractured sense of our human condition and the hyperbolic threat of death.

It is also in this poem that we find the first question ever attributed to a god-being: Yahweh, God, or Allah—according to the three primary monotheistic faiths, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

The way people have looked at or tried to understand this god-being—especially within the three major world religions—has splintered time after time. The way people treated other people from different religious backgrounds is something many people are familiar with. Never mind how people within specific religions can unfairly treat each other, for the negative effects of religion often stick with us longer than the supposed benefits.

There is a truth to everything, though.

Meaning, a common truth exists.

Is God real? This is not the book to answer that question. However, this is the book to discuss our life's response to the idea God is real.

The makeup of our world on a microscopic or cellular level speaks to this. If you have heard of atoms, protons, neutrons, or electrons.

If you can remember anything from the periodic table of elements, things like oxygen and hydrogen. The way things interact with each other have a pre-determined outcome.

For example, scientists have been able to determine that the earth is actually tilted—not straight up and down—at an angle of 23.5 degrees. If it were to be moved more than a degree in either direction, life on this planet would be unrecognizable.

These kinds of truths are known as “laws.” They describe the ways things work and how what we know and experience would be drastically different if any of these “laws” changed. In a way, these truths are common for everyone.

Another example would be gravity. Have you ever experienced a fall or an imbalance and crash to the earth? You encountered gravity and it affects everyone.

Like these physical truths, there are probably truths that are common amongst people in a less obvious way.

Many people in history claimed to possess this common truth.

It even happens today.

This claim of knowing the whole truth and nothing but the truth is peddled in many ways and expressed by all sorts of people. In a way, this book could be interpreted in that way. In exploring stories to help us make sense of a commonality amongst all of us, we flirt with the notion that the truths found within are actually common for all people.

I don't claim to know the whole truth, but I believe I at least found the door.

Regarding religious, scientific, political, sociological, economical, or philosophical differences, this is not the space where I attempt to directly reconcile the similarities and differences among these areas of thought.

In the pursuit of a commonality for all people, I believe in a singular explanation for the existence of all things. Meaning all of what we think must stem from a

“somewhere,” a

“someone,” or a

“something.”

In a way, we all live in a way where we try to make sense of our experiences. We are very good at making common connections. We like people that like the same things as us. We like to eat food we know we like. We all have our habits, rituals, and traditions, which is part of being human. Even the most unorganized people in our lives still have a system of how they keep things “in order.”

In quantum physics, there are a number of researchers searching to find a unifying theory of existence or a singularity from which all of life can be understood.

It makes sense, doesn't it?

We experience and make sense of our lives through the lens of starting points and ending points.

For some, they prefer the explanation of our origin back- story being more chaotic.

It's all a crazy random happenstance!

It might be.

That is part of what makes this life so exciting. No matter the origin, if you're alive, you have the chance to make this life into any number of things. Where, when, and to whom you were born has its effect. Overall, more so than any other time in human history, at least here in America and other developed countries,

people are able to almost do anything they set their heart to doing or accomplishing.

In the early pages of the ancient Jewish poem is the mythic legend of a god-being who goes to work creating things.

Beginning with nothing but a darkened canvas, this creator-god-being turned on the lights and made things. From a formless nothing into formed things; from sky and water to land and air, and from animals, fish, and birds to fill those spaces. There are celestial patterns to mark the created order of time. The poem concludes the narrative of creative events with the manifestation or incarnation of the creator-god-being's essence and being into a tangible form and likeness.

Going from a formless nothing to us would be more like creating with clay before there was clay or even the idea of it.

It's like having the idea for something, and not being sure of how to make it happen. But in order to make it happen, you have to make something else. And because that thing doesn't yet exist, you then create something else in order to create that one thing you pictured.

If you have ever heard of the phrase "reverse-engineering," it means to begin your work with the end in mind. You visualize what it is you are aiming to accomplish or create and then work backwards to determine what your first next step is. The amount of steps in between your first step and the final step-- the finished product-- could sometimes be measured to the nth degree.

As a kid, I enjoyed building with LEGOS. They are toy blocks that connect with each other to form shapes and patterns. They are different from wood blocks that easily stack and knock over. They have notches that latch with other pieces. What the creators do for a design is a picture of the final product and then give you a direction book showing you steps on how to build it.

I have two kids and they both love building with LEGOS. They enjoy when I play with them because I will build elaborate things without following any instructions.

“How did you build that, Dad?”

They like following instructions to build the final design they see on the box. Thinking of something that doesn't exist yet, building it, and then playing with it is the closest we can understand creating something out of nothing.

This is what the three major world religions believe. At the center of everything lies a being that made all things.

The smallest known particle cannot be seen with just our eyes. We need powerful electron microscopes to see the atoms that make up our existence. Atoms are in everything. The word “atom” means indivisible.

Scientists, in their pursuit to discover the center of every- thing, have split the atom to see what is inside. Like a child to a piñata, so scientists have done to the atom. Unfortunately, there's no candy inside an atom, but neither were the answers scientists were hoping for. Atoms are made up of those protons, neutrons, and electrons. Beyond what we know, there's a lot to discover there, and an explanation on how the world got here still eludes us all.

Yet, here we are.

Humans.

Talking about things called atoms.

Wondering why they are still reading this book and not streaming their favorite show.

I have this audacious idea that we are the unifying theory to everything.

That's right.

Humans.

Are.

The.

Answer.

YOU are the—

Okay.

Let me back up.

Let's get back to the ancient poem about the beginning of all things.

The poem says that basically, humans are like a self-portrait of the creator-god-being. We are more than just the conglomeration of a mom and dad; our origin story goes back further, to a God whom created everything. If this is true, then humans are—in a more fancy way of saying—

*a finite image of an infinite presence and effect.*

Clears up all confusion, yeah?

According to legend, the first human creature was called man. Mostly because the language used to write the poem had harder and softer aspects to it. In the English language, we have consonants and vowels. The writer of the poem didn't use English. Their language is understood through masculine and feminine, harder sounds and softer sounds. If you have studied or speak the Spanish

language at all, then this idea isn't new to you. It may not seem important, but it really is.

The masculine aspect of the language has led people to interpret the ancient text in specific ways. Based on your faith background—if you have one—you have probably heard of the god-being as a “He” or “Him.”

So, the first “human” was a man and because man was created in the image of his creator, the creator must be some form or “him.”

However, the poem tells about how the man was alone and it wasn't good for him to be alone. The creator-god-being (let's shorten it to Creator) put the man to sleep, removed a rib bone, made another human, and then had the man wake up.

The man wakes up and calls the new human “woman.” The author of the poem used feminine language to describe “her.”

The Creator brought out of the man, much like the Creator brought out of Himself, an image bearer.

So the poem goes that this Creator made both man and woman. Through the intimate relationship of the man and woman, other image bearers would come.

For the Creator, the masculine and feminine aspects of the being's essence and effect are represented in man and woman. The Creator saw to it that being singular wasn't right, but in terms of life and purpose saw one created man could not wholly possess what the Creator is “made of ” and put it in two different expressions—man and woman.

The Creator took matter, formed it, and from His own “breath” or “spirit,” He animated (brought to life) the man. Convincing arguments have been given to both justify and deny our physical forms being a representation of the Creator, as if he is in some other unseen realm appearing in human form. Whether this is



true or not, it is not answered in this book. Primarily, as we get into the later chapters, it's not so much about what we look like, but more so the way we live, work, relate, and play. Our way of living serves as a mirror, reflecting what we believe about the Creator and an understanding of our collective origin story.

The imagery in the poem shows us two things were necessary for us to become real.

One part creative eternality (something infinite like a god) and the other part created matter (something finite).

This is compounded in the symbolism of man and woman.

Two existing parts coming together in order to make a singular new person. A man by himself or a woman by herself lack the ability to create baby versions of themselves on their own.

For some reason, this Creator-God needed to have some fun and created an asexual Seahorse that produces other asexual Seahorses on their own.

Why?

No idea.

Random thought, but it's true.

\* \* \*

Now, the poem has been read in a variety of ways. Simply, there are three primary ways to read it. Literally, allegorically, and a made-up word; nuancely (or dynamically).

For the sake of brevity, here is the basic break down of the three.

**Literally-** means that what is written is what happened. The Creator God is a real supernatural being. Beyond our exhaustive comprehension. There was literally one man, one woman, etc. Each day was literally a 24-hour period. There was a (spoiler alert) literal serpent with a literal fruit tree. Man looks like the Creator-God and Creator-God looks like man.

**Allegorically-** means that what was written is a lot like the ancient parable at the beginning of this book. There may or may not be a supreme supernatural being. There may or may not have been a singular man and a singular woman. The serpent could have been imagery representing the thoughts that pit us against the Creator-God. The trees are thought patterns.

**Nuancely-** means that the Creator-God is probably real, but in a capacity that we can only know His part, not His whole. There may have been two people to start because we know people are real, so it all had to start somewhere. The serpent, man, woman, and a piece of fruit could have been real actors. They ate that literal fruit, but the fruit adversely affected the way they viewed and related with the Creator-God, them- selves, others, and the creation man was to oversee. Like the parable, the lesson from the story probably matters more than the potential literalism.

If you are from the United States, we are subject to think- ing dualistically or in binary categories. We distill things, ideas, and also people into two categories.

Good & Evil

Black & White

Right & Wrong

Life & Death

Rich & Poor

## Success & Failure

### Ford & Chevy

Okay, maybe the last one isn't on the list, but you get the point. *Literal* and *allegorical* were the two major interpretative camps of the early faith-in-Jesus-movement. Two different schools sprang up in what is now modern day Middle East and Africa, Antioch and Alexandria. The Antioch school read the ancient texts primarily through a literal lens while the Alexandrian school read through an allegorical lens.

Allegory leans *nuance*. However you want to envision the varying levels of influence active in any given situation or interaction, it has the room for the shades of gray, all the colors on the light spectrum, or reading between the lines.

Reorienting how we view or interpret things is the necessary shift for us to have a deeper understanding of our lives.

For the man and woman in the poem, they were formed and fashioned by the Creator-God, were called "good" and given a five-fold directive:

Be fruitful.

Multiply.

Fill the earth.

Subdue it.

Rule over it.

The poem ends with clarification on what to eat. Spoiler alert: You're to be vegetarians.

Before you throw this book in the trash, bear with me.

See what I did there.

Jokes aside, let's keep going.

There is a disparity of understanding in regards to the ancient poem. Something changed in the writing and the tone from "You're to be vegetarians" to a summation of the poem.

Furthermore, the poem said the man and woman were naked and felt no shame.

The text changes from a poetic song to more of a historical record. Whatever was or wasn't in the beginning of all things took a turn in the writer's account of events. In the traditional referencing of the material, translators make a break between the poem in the writing's first and second chapter.

In the second and third chapter, we could see more details about the woman and the one non-negotiable given by the Creator-God. The non-negotiable was "eat of every tree *except* the one in the *middle* called *knowledge of good & evil*."

If you are familiar with the Christian and Jewish version of events, the man and the women directly violated the order to refrain from the tree in the middle. Arguably, the man and the woman were content with not eating of its "fruit" until the text revealed a fourth character—the serpent submitting a different idea for the man and woman to consider.

The serpent or in the ancient language, "the cunning one," asked a leading question to the unsuspecting people.

Earlier, I introduced how we ask all sorts of questions. I imagine some questions are better than others.

The question by "the serpent" casted doubt in the minds of the man and woman. The doubt was one of a perceived disconnection between them and the Creator-God.

“If God can eat from this tree, why can’t we?”

Upon consuming the fruit of this question, the writer wrote, “Immediately, their eyes were opened.”

If you’re following along with me, when it says “their eyes were opened,” it wasn’t literal. They weren’t blind in the physical sense, but to something more intangible or invisible.

Their “seeing” was a light bulb moment, revelatory, but in an unwelcome way.

The man and woman “realized” they were “naked” and each of them responded by trying to cover themselves.

Based on your understanding of this Creator-God, you may be familiar with this.

Based on the tradition of faith (we all have faith in something, even if it is in “nothing,” however not everyone of us would identify as “religious”) in which you grew up, you may have a memory of this story and the Creator-God’s reaction or sentiment toward the man and woman.

Have you ever felt the tinge of guilt whenever you let someone down or they were disappointed with you?

That thought stems from this story.

When we feel that guilt, we are recognizing our wrongs in our relationship with that person.

For the man and the woman, they realized they were not the same as their Creator-God. They self-identified a sense of disconnection between themselves and their Creator.

Immediately, they began blaming others for this new un-welcomed sense of awareness. This new awareness created a domino effect of broken relationships and how to navigate them.

In love, the Creator-God sought after them with a one-word question.

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