

THE LIVING ALBION: BLAKE'S RELIGION OF MAN

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by
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To the Graduate Council:

I am submitting herewith a Research Paper written by Cheryll Bernadette Aderholdt entitled "The Living Albion: Blake's Religion of Man." I recommend that it be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts, with a major in English.

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THE LIVING ALBION: BLAKE'S RELIGION OF MAN

Through the greater part of the eighteenth century, man was dominated by various religious and philosophical systems which limited him within his universe to traditional precedents, the common sense dicta which restrained every effort of man whether in politics, thought, morals, or art. During the following Romantic age, one of the first of those philosophers and poets who were hostile to the tendencies of the preceding neoclassic period was William Blake. Critical of most of the developing attitudes and convictions of his contemporaries, he said: "I will not Reason & Compare: my business is to Create";¹ and that he did, employing that faculty which characterizes the Romantic period, the imagination. "The nature of my work," said Blake, "is Visionary or Imaginative; it is an Endeavor to Restore what the Ancients call'd the Golden Age" (639).

Central to Blake's opposition to his times and, indeed, to all his work, is his refusal to accept institutionalized religion. Passionately renouncing traditional

¹All citations to Blake's poetry are from the following edition: William Blake, Poetry and Prose of William Blake, ed. Geoffrey Keynes (London, 1961), p. 460.

Christianity, he determined to create his own system, else "be enslav'd by another Man's" (460). In discerning his own religion, Blake did not attempt to establish a new sect; nor did he preach his opinions. But, translated into the context of his myth, the following statement was undoubtedly felt and earnestly believed by this intensely aware poet:

Man must & will have Some Religion: if he has not the Religion of Jesus, he will have the Religion of Satan & will erect the Synagogue of Satan, calling the Prince of this World, God, and destroying all who do not worship Satan under the Name of God. (498)

In response to this belief and in the course of his work, Blake designed a myth through which he offers man a new perspective of man's relationship to his God. For Blake, the only true God resides in the human heart, which is the source of the subject matter for all of Blake's poetry; his theme, the brotherhood of man. Before I examine the first of the four major works to be considered in this paper, some knowledge of Blake's intent in his poetry and his view of man will be helpful. Then shall follow my interpretation of Blake's use of the orthodox terms Jehovah and Jesus which provides new insights into his thinking and which illustrates the progression toward the "Jerusalem" of Blake's myth, the imagination.

When Blake began to evaluate his own perspective of life, he rejected the standards of life about him in eighteenth century England. Liberating his views to follow his own intuition and emotion in his work, to develop his

own vision of the world, he designed--and invited all man to consider--a means of living to an end which he called the "real man, the imagination" (926). By blending his engraving and painting skills with his poetry, Blake sought to express the totality of his extraordinary vision of man. A process of interlocking the words and designs, the endeavor of his art was to present what he believed was a nearly perfect vision of man. His designs added dimension to his works, not decoration; they added significance to, rather than simplified, his text. These facts are indicative of the workings of the man's mind. Discussing the subject of his art, Blake once commented:

the notion that man has a body distinct from his soul is to be expunged; this I shall do by printing in the infernal method, by corrosives, which in Hell are salutary and medicinal, melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid. (187)

Blake's design is one which clarifies for others his vision of man's path to salvation. To understand his poetry, we view life as Blake chose to view it; and he looks through the eye, not with it. That is, he was able to see beyond the material world and into the world of the imagination. Blake saw man as a being who has "closed himself up, till he sees all things thro' narrow chinks of his cavern" (187), and he believed that if the "doors of perception were cleansed, every thing would appear to man as it is, infinite" (187). This is the task which Blake assumed, for he recognized his particular concept of man's need for an

imaginative faith in himself. As he was to express later in one of his greatest works, Jerusalem:

I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body & mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination, Imagination, the real & eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow, & in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more. (535)

Hoping to correct the intellectual errors he discovered in the Bible and in Milton's Paradise Lost, Blake produced a Bible of his own, a work which illustrates just how revolutionary, how unconventional, and how unorthodox he was.

Blake first uses the terms Jehovah and Jesus in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, a work sometimes referred to as his Bible of Energy. Although the appearances of these particular terms in this work are few, they symbolize the clearest and most forceful statement of Blake's opposition to traditional religion. Eager to impugn Christian dualism, the separation of "what the religious call Good and Evil" (181), the heavenly and the demoniac, and ready to challenge man to reexamine these classifications, Blake extended the design of his contraries presented in his Songs of Innocence and Experience. Considering the man's hostility to the conventional forms of religion in the churches in England about 1790, it is not surprising that he should propose wedding heaven and hell. Indeed, he deemed the contraries essential in man's experience:

"Without Contraries is no progression" (181). So we should expect that he alters the perspective traditionally associated with Milton's God. By setting the Old and New Testaments in opposition, Blake presents religion as a cycle, rotating between Jehovah and Jesus, the law-giver and the liberator.

Blake's Jehovah in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell is the "Jehovah of the Bible being no other than he who dwells in flaming fire" (182). He represents the cruel, wrathful father thundering in anger when his sons are disobedient and ungrateful. As the law-giver, the creator of the "Thou-shalt-nots," it is he who clouds the sky, ever darkening man's already god-fearing existence whenever man dares to challenge Jehovah's law, to struggle against the chains of restriction. Blake recognized a need of both energy and restraint--mostly energy in his day; but a good society, he insists, needs both. To emphasize his feeling, Blake establishes his contraries, associating such terms as "angel" and "heaven" with restraint and repression; terms such as "hell" and "devil" and "evil" refer to the contraries of repression: energy and freedom. To the statement "That Energy, call'd Evil, is alone from the Body; & that Reason, Call'd Good, is alone from the Soul" (182), Blake writes, speaking through the voice of the devil:

Energy is the only life, and is from the Body: and Reason is the bound or outward circumference of Energy. Energy is Eternal Delight. (182)

Blake sensed something utilitarian in the moralistic attitudes of the religious institutions arising, not out of the human heart, but in the reason-bound brain. Rather than the repressive "Thou shalt nots," the real purpose of the church is to spread the doctrine of love. Individual choice should be prevalent, according to Blake's thinking--not a set of rules defined by society for all and which should be acceptable to some external deity sitting on his throne in the sky: "One Law for the Lion and Ox is Oppression" (191). Speaking through his poetry to those who wanted to listen, Blake opposes the forces of tyranny and restraint represented in this work by Jehovah.

Blake presents his Christ as a contrary figure to the Jehovah figure of the Old Testament; i.e., Jesus represents opposition to restraint. Whereas Milton's God requires that all men alike should cower before his omnipotence, Blake believed in the individuality of men. They should not be dominated by some god "afar off"; nor should they allow themselves to be restricted by another man or by any scheme of living. Man's condition involves establishing a tension between "good" and "evil" which, to Blake, are both good in God's eyes. Criticizing religion as an endeavor to reconcile the differences among men, Blake argues that to do so is to destroy existence:

Jesus Christ did not wish to unite, but to separate [sic] them, as in the Parable of the sheep and the goats! & he says: "I came not to send Peace, but a Sword." (188)

In another instance, a devil says to an angel: "The worship of God is: Honouring his gifts in other men, each according to his genius, and loving the greatest men best: those who envy or calumniate great men hate God; for there is no other God" (191). Not understanding the devil's words, the angel angrily replies:

"Thou Idolator! is not God One? & is not he visible in
Jesus
"Christ? and has not Jesus Christ given his sanction
to the
"law of ten commandments? and are not all other men
fools,
"sinners & nothings?" (191)

Blake's answer illustrates the image of Jesus he wishes to portray: "If Jesus Christ is the greatest man, you ought to love him in the greatest degree" (191). Describing Jesus, the man, Blake finds support for opposition to restraint in the actions of Christ:

"did he not mock at the sabbath and so mock the
sabbath's God:
"murder those who were murder'd because of him? turn
away the
"law from the woman taken in adultery? steal the labor
of others
"to support him? bear false witness when he omitted
making a
"defence before Pilate? covet when he pray'd for his
disciples,
"and when he bid them shake off the dust of their feet
against
"such as refused to lodge them? I tell you, no virtue
can exist
"without breaking these ten commandments. Jesus was
all virtue,
"and acted from impulse, not from rules." (191)

This Christ is a very human man who opposes the restrictions of the unjust Miltonic Jehovah. Blake explains Milton's position as follows:

The reason Milton wrote in fetters when he wrote of Angels & God, and at liberty when of Devils & Hell, is because he was a true Poet and of the Devil's party without knowing it. (182)

The Christ in Paradise Lost is the obedient son, the light of the fire of the ruling Jehovah. As Satan took the right to rule in Hell, so Milton's Christ claims the right to rule in heaven and to receive obedience from man for salvation.

Blake attacks all forms of restraint; his reversal of values is a way of attacking society which he believes is enslaved by its own laws. Bound thinking causes society's evils, as he maintains in his Proverbs of Hell: "Prisons are built with stones of Law, Brothels with bricks of Religion" (183). Thus, in vivid contrast to Jesus, Blake's Jehovah is the cruel, angry, tyrannical father, and, therefore, an apparently unjustifiable figure; and Jesus appears as the rebellious son who follows his impulsive desires, vents his energy, opposes restraint, and mocks the selfish father. The two are presented yoked as contraries; both are necessary, for man's successful existence involves not one faculty, reason, controlling another, desire; but, the two finally working together in harmony, one tempering the other.

Whereas in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell Blake presents Jehovah and Jesus as two forces in implied activity, namely, reason and desire, the poet expands his myth in The Four Zoas, portraying the two as members of the Council

of God:

Four Mighty Ones are in every Man; a Perfect Unity
Cannot Exist but from the Universal Brotherhood of Eden,
The Universal Man, To Whom be Glory Evermore. Amen. (252)

.....
Then those in Great Eternity met in the Council of God
As one Man, for contracting their Exalted Senses
They behold Multitude, or Expanding they behold as one,
As One Man all the Universal family; & that One Man
They call Jesus the Christ, & they in him & he in them
Live in Perfect harmony, in Eden the land of life,
Consulting as One Man above the Mountain of Snowdon
Sublime. (264)

Jesus is "One Man," the Universal Man, in whom are four faculties: instinct, love, reason, and imagination. A shapeless unity, he lives in "Perfect harmony, in Eden the land of life" until discord erupts in Universal Man and he experiences the "torments of Love and Jealousy in the Death and Judgment / Of Albion the Ancient Man" (251). As the zoas compete among themselves, each seeking control and disrupting man's unity, they lose the divinity of man. This loss is Blake's version of the fall of man, for it is as a result of this conflict and division within man that he loses sight of the divine image in others as well as in himself. Unlike Milton's sons who are born guilty of an original sin, Blake's Albion is born in a state of innocence, a "Perfect Unity" but potentially capable of both good and ill. Jesus is "One Man all the Universal family"; mutually one, together "they in him & he in them" (264).

As we might expect after The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, the only reference to Jehovah, provided in the Four Zoas, is not a very flattering one. Now named Urizen, he

is the "Jehovah, who leprous stretch'd his hand to Eternity" (341). Remembering the tyrannical Jehovah in The Marriage, we might logically suspect that this Jehovah-figure, as Urizen, suggesting "your reason" or "horizon," is the cause of Albion's exodus from Eden. Full of pride, he is contaminated in his Selfhood and, as a part of Albion, unavoidably contributes to his chaotic state. Desiring to usurp control, to mechanize and direct man's energies, Urizen and his cohorts weave a Web of Religion which ensnares man and removes from him all liberty. By repressing man and entangling him in webs of social and moral law, Jehovah, as the temporary ruler of the cosmos, distorts Albion's instinctive abilities and hinders his progress toward reunification. Asserting his power over the other faculties, this Urizen-Jehovah proclaims his role as a god and gathers the Synagogue of Satan, which is Urizen's temple, to "judge the Lamb of God to Death as a murderer & robber" (338).

"Obey my voice, young Demon; I am God from Eternity
to Eternity.

"Art thou a visionary of Jesus, the soft delusion
of Eternity?

"Lo I am God, the terrible destroyer,
& not the Saviour.

"Why should the Divine Vision compell the sons of
Eden

"To forego each his own delight, to war against
his spectre?

"The Spectre is the Man. The rest is only delusion
& fancy." (260)

Coming into direct confrontation with Los, the power of imagination, Urizen-Jehovah is quite like the Jehovah figure

indolence, / Veils of ignorance covering from head to feet with a cold web" (336-7). Likewise, he retains the characteristics supporting Blake's philosophy of pursuing one's desires and following one's energies with thought but without restraint:

For the Divine Lamb, Even Jesus who is the Divine
 Vision,
 Permitted all, lest Man should fall into Eternal Death;
 For when Luvah sunk down, himself put on the robes of
 blood
 Lest the state call'd Luvah should cease; & the Divine
 Vision
 Walked in robes of blood till he who slept should
 awake. . . . (274)

.
 Then All in Great Eternity Met in the Council of God . . .
 As one Man, Even Jesus . . .
 Upon the Limit of Contraction to create the fallen Man.
 The fallen Man stretch'd like a corse upon the oozy
 Rock,
 Wash'd with the tides, pale, overgrown with weeds
 That mov'd with horrible dreams . . . (331)

Setting an example for Albion, Jesus appeared to the daughters of Beulah as a "bright Light" in which they saw a "Human form, / And knew he was the Saviour, Even Jesus: & they worshipped" (332). In the incarnation of Jesus, Blake sets the gospel of brotherhood against the religion of Satan and suggests unconditional forgiveness of sin as a means for an imaginative faith. Recognizable as the divine image in this human form, Jesus is the glimmer of divinity enduring even in the state of Ulro. By wittingly cultivating his imagination, Albion may repose on the Couch of Death, with other imaginative forms; and, though they may experience "horrible dreams" during the state of experience, they sleep only "till dawn was wont to awake

them." When the sun rises, it brings the light of understanding and vision; and imaginative forms awaken to find themselves "in the Saviour's arms, in the tender mercy & loving kindness" of Jesus.

Thus, the forces of reason and desire represented by Jehovah and Jesus in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell have evolved, primarily, into the characters Urizen and Los; competing, the two effect much of the darkness in Albion's world. Abandoning The Four Zoas in which he contends with that darkness, the poet turned in 1804 to the shortest of his major epics, Milton, "To Justify the Ways of God to Man." Blake's use of the word god, we have learned, does not have the same connotation as Milton's. Adapting the poet's motto in Paradise Lost to his own myth, Blake hoped to enlighten that darkness in his England not only by correcting the intellectual errors of man, as he regarded belief in the traditional Urizenic-Jehovah god; but also by invoking Milton to return as a saviour for Blake and, thus, for mankind.

In Milton the conflict between the forces of restriction and rebellion-against-restriction becomes an internal struggle as Milton contends with his desire for Jerusalem. Compelled by his own divine vision, Blake determined not to discount entirely but to amend Milton's interpretation of the creation, fall and redemption of man. Reiterating his perspective of man's descent into Generation,

Blake speaks through Lucifer who relates to Milton the formation of man:

"We were Angels of the Divine Presence . . .
 "Compell'd to combine into Form by Satan, the Spectre
 of Albion,
 "Who made himself a God & destroyed the Human Form
 Divine.
 "But the Divine Humanity & Mercy gave us a Human Form
 "Because we were combin'd in Freedom & holy Brotherhood,
 "While those combin'd by Satan's Tyranny, first in
 blood of War
 "And Sacrifice & next in Chains of imprisonment, are
 Shapeless Rocks
 "Retaining only Satan's Mathematic Holiness, Length,
 Breadth, & Hight,
 "Calling the Human Imagination, which is the Divine
 Vision & Fruition
 "In which Man liveth eternally, madness & blasphemy
 against
 "Its own Qualities, which are Servants of Humanity, not
 Gods or Lords." (418)

As a member of the Divine Family and as an exemplary of
 "Divine Humanity & Mercy," Jesus infinitely perpetuates the
 "human form." His shapeless unity distorted into form by
 Satan, Albion becomes divided against himself and blindly
 bows first to one, then another "Quality" in man which
 should serve rather than enslave him.

Jesus, "the image of the Invisible God" (376), falls
 prey to the conflict experienced by Albion. Urizen, the zoa
 calling himself "God the judge of all, the living and the
 dead" (427), asserts his power over man by tempting him to
 worship him "till All Things become One Great Satan, in
 Holiness / "Opposed to Mercy, and the Divine Delusion, Jesus,
 be no more" (427). Those who yield to temptation become
 powerless, inactive, and unthinking bodies of men "combin'd

by Satan's Tyranny" and bound to their foolish and selfish laws. Unable to accept the ideas that man owes allegiance to some external force, that he is inherently evil, and that he should fear some external hell, Blake was eager to produce Milton. He himself had been a victim

. . . of the False Tongue! vegetated
 Beneath your land of shadows, of its sacrifices and
 Its offerings: even till Jesus, the image of the
 Invisible God,
 Became its prey, a curse, an offering and an atonement
 For Death Eternal in the heavens of Albion & before
 the Gates
 Of Jerusalem his Emanation, in the heavens beneath
 Beulah. (376)

Blake's England had become a "land of shadows" swallowed by the dark clouds of inhumanity and enchained in a Milton religious system which Blake could not tolerate. Man will listen to Blake's words--"Obey thou the Words of the Inspired Man" (429)--else be enslaved by Satan, the rational powers in divided man. By determining his own way through generation, man may come to know "Jesus the Eternal who is blessed for ever & ever" (416); however, Blake saw the masses of humanity dominated by forces beyond themselves. For example, Milton was trapped in Puritan England, bound within the system of moral virtues, one of the hells man creates for himself and from which he must redeem himself. By bursting the chains of the system which he had helped create, Milton might clarify his vision and gain sight of the light of Eden. Milton declares his ability to annihilate Satan, but he admits: "such are the Laws of the

false Heav'n's" (426); i.e., to cast out evil is the law of Milton's Jehovah. In Blake's system, the presence of both good and evil are essential as contraries. According to the laws of Eternity, Milton now realizes, " . . . each shall mutually / "Annihilate himself for the others' good, as I for thee" (427).

Jesus is hidden by the "garments" in which man dresses himself during his state of experience; they are "the destroyers of Jerusalem, these are the murderers / "Of Jesus, who deny the Faith & mock at Eternal Life" (430). In removing the garments of his former doctrines and in sacrificing himself for a new understanding of God, Milton must "bathe in the Waters of Life, to wash off the Not Human":

"I come in Self-annihilation & the grandeur of
 Inspiration,
 "To cast off Rational Demonstration by Faith in the
 Saviour,
 "To cast off the rotten rags of Memory by Inspiration,
 "To take off his (Albion's) filthy garments & clothe
 him with Imagination,
 "To cast aside from Poetry all that is not Inspiration,
 "To cast off the idiot Questioner who is always
 questioning
 "But never capable of answering . . . "
 "And those who act with Benevolence & Virtue they
 murder time on time." (430)

Blake's Jesus is that faith of man in humanity which is crushed by the delusions blindly adhered to by those who "pretend to Poetry that they may destroy Imagination / "By imitation of Nature's Images drawn from Remembrance" (430).

Blake refers to these as

" . . . Sexual Garments, the Abomination of Desolation,
 "Hiding the Human Lineaments as with an Arc & Curtains
 "Which Jesus rent & now shall wholly purge away with
 Fire

"Till Generation is swallow'd up in Regeneration." (430)

Although he was enclosed in the uncontrollable arc of his religious beliefs, Milton is able, through Blake, to identify the fire of inspiration to direct his own course; he removes the curtains of fearful obedience to the laws of moral restriction which before had kept him in Ulro. Distinguishing between his renewed purpose and Satan's own, he affirms:

"Thy purpose & the purpose of thy Priests & of thy
 Churches

"Is to impress on men the fear of death, to teach
 "Trembling & fear, terror, constriction, abject
 selfishness.

"Mine is to teach Men to despise death & to go on & saw
 "In fearless majesty annihilating Self, laughing to
 scorn

"Thy Laws & terrors, shaking down thy Synagogues as
 webs." (427)

According to Blake, mankind need not fear death "if we are but just & true / To our own Imaginations, those worlds of Eternity in which we shall live for ever in JESUS OUR LORD" (375). By rejecting the temptations of Urizen and the demands of Satan to bow down in obedience to some deity other than "Jesus / The Eternal who is blessed for ever & ever" (416), man may recognize the power of Jesus; but, Blake fears man has no faith in

" . . . the dear Saviour who took on the likeness of men,
 "Becoming obedient to death, even the death of the
 Cross.

"The Witnesses lie dead in the Street of the Great City:

"No Faith is in all the Earth: the Book of God is trodden under Foot." (402)

What do men want in a god? Scornfully Blake reproaches those who say "shew us Miracles!" (402) and he asks: "Can you have greater Miracles than these? Men who devote / "Their life's whole comfort to intire scorn & injury & death?" (402) These are the incarnations of Blake's god. "Awake, Albion, awake!" says Blake as he urges men to turn from blind obedience, to arouse themselves from inactivity, and to recognize his god, the god in man.

Jesus is the spark of imagination which brings Lazarus out of Ulro in Blake's reinterpretation of this parable:

"When Jesus rais'd Lazarus from the Grave I stood & saw
"Lazarus, who is the Vehicular Body of Albion the Redeem'd,

"Arise into the Covering Cherub, who is the Spectre of Albion,

"By martyrdoms to suffer, to watch over the Sleeping Body

"Upon his Rock beneath his Tomb." (404)

As in the Four Zoas, Jesus accompanies the wandering man through chaos seeking a sepulcher in the state of experience. Entering Eternal Death, man need not doubt his eternity if he cultivates his imagination. "The Imagination is not a State; it is the Human Existence itself" (418):

God himself enters Death's Door always with those that enter

And lays down in the Grave with them, in Visions of Eternity,

Till they awake & see Jesus. . . (419)

Although Lazarus must "arise into the Covering Cherub" (404), this is but a "Temporal Habitation" (416). Man necessarily dresses in the clothes of the fallen human form, for "you cannot go to Eternal Death in that which can never Die" (418). Physical bodies are the vehicles for those "who are but for a time & who pass away in winter" (416). When Jesus awakens Lazarus from the grave, Lazarus rolls away the "rock" of his former faith to open the "Tomb," revealing the divine image within himself. Man is only in Blake's hell when he confines his experience, when he closes his eyes to divine vision.

Jesus illustrates the true and only faith for man, faith in the divinity of man: that which admits the presence in man of both good and ill forces, one tempering the other, but both essential for man's endeavors to cultivate his imagination, which finally becomes his eternity. This faith is the key to the gates of Blake's upper paradise, or reality, which is in Eden. Success in the generative world is the ability to endure the burdens of humanity and to brighten the fire of Inspiration in every man; it achieves the renewed glory of Beulah and Eden. Failure to cultivate the imagination may result in sinking into the state of Ulro. Blake felt that Milton frequented Ulro, especially when he wrote of the law-giving Jehovah.

Blake's portrayal of Jehovah in Milton reveals the flexibility of the faculty he is most easily associated with--reason. Clearly, this Jehovah is not totally an evil force; nor is he opposed by Jesus as is the restraining-Jehovah by the rebellious son in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell. Rather, he possesses the potential for both good and ill authority; the original unity is lost when the balance of power is challenged. Jehovah is yet primarily associated with the dark clouds of strife within Albion, which contribute to the struggle in Milton to gather self-awareness.

Jehovah represents one of the religious cycles preceding the coming of Jesus. After the creation of sin in eternity, there was ". . . created a New Space to protect Satan from punishment" (389). Time was given to Space by the Eternals and a guardian to watch over this space until it should again become one with Albion. The succession of guardians of this space, which is life as we know it, Blake terms the "Seven Eyes of God" (403):

. . . Loud raging
 Thunder'd the Assembly dark & clouded, and they
 ratify'd
 Even Six Thousand years, and sent Lucifer for its
 Guard.
 But Lucifer refus'd to die & in pride he forsook his
 charge:
 And they elected Molech, and when Molech was impatient
 The Divine hand found the Two Limits, first of
 Opacity, then of Contraction.
 Opacity was named Satan, Contraction was named Adam.
 Triple Elohim came: Elohim wearied fainted: they
 elected Shaddai:
 Shaddai angry, Pahad descended: Pahad terrified,
 they sent Jehovah,

"I am God alone:
 "There is no other! let all obey my principles of
 moral individuality." (385)

He is the Jehovah who

" . . . thunder'd above
 "Chaos & ancient night fled from beneath the fiery
 Harrow:
 "The Harrow cast thick flames & orb'd us round in
 concave fires,
 "A hell of our own making; see! its flames still
 gird me round.
 "Jehovah thunder'd above; Satan in pride of heart
 "Drove the fierce Harrow among the constellations
 of Jehovah,
 "Drawing a third part in the fires as stubble
 north and south
 "To devour Albion and Jerusalem, the Emanation of
 Albion,
 "Driving the Harrow in Pity's paths: 'twas then,
 with our dark fires
 "Which now gird round us (O eternal torment!) I
 form'd the Serpent
 "Of precious stones & gold, turn'd poisons on the
 sultry wastes." (388)

At the same time, he has the potential for good which is re-
 vealed when Los, Blake's protagonist,

. . . dispers'd the clouds even as the strong winds
 of Jehovah,
 And Los thus spoke: "O noble Sons, be patient yet
 a little!
 "I have embrac'd the falling Death, he is become
 One with me:
 "O Sons, we live not by wrath, by mercy alone we
 live!" (403)

The winds of Jehovah are free, either to be a gentle force
 spreading the dark clouds away to brighten Albion's day or
 to build into an uncontrollable and destructive force. Los,
 the imagination in fallen man, accepts death and realizes
 that through mercy, not rage and anger, man may live.

Thus, both Jehovah and Jesus aid in bringing Milton to a new awareness of his relationship to God. Milton discovers the imaginative man as God, God in Milton himself, and God as the "Human Imagination, / Which is the Divine Body of the Lord Jesus, blessed for ever" (377). Essentially, Jehovah is presented metaphorically as dark clouds separating man from the light of Jesus, and as garments of traditional doctrines preventing his exposure both to the brilliance of the light of Divine Vision and to the understanding of that Jesus who is the faith in the divinity of man and in the brotherhood of mankind.

In his greatest epic, Jerusalem, Blake surveys the fallen condition of man, his mental confusion specifically, represented again in the character Albion. Again, Los is the creative and potential element in man, trying to clarify man's vision and to reunite his competing faculties. Blake would like to end the cycles he has presented between the Old and New Testaments, Jehovah and Jesus; but he is still seeking the "new Jerusalem" in this poem. The confrontation between truth and error is still present, and necessarily so.

Blake refers to both Jehovah and Jesus in Jerusalem as he describes Albion's search for and discovery of Jerusalem. Noticeably, he assigns to each of the two terms values heretofore attributed to the other; and the two, mutually conveying Blake's message, lead us to a fuller

understanding of Blake's god. Stating immediately his hope that his readers will join him, "wholly One in Jesus our Lord, who is the God of Fire and Lord of Love to whom the Ancients look'd and saw his day afar off, with trembling and amazement" (433), Blake juxtaposes, for the first time, the characteristics of the Jehovah-Jesus antithesis. The law-giver and liberator in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell evolved into the Urizen and Luvah-Orc cycle in The Four Zoas and achieved greater affinity in Milton. In Jerusalem, Blake suggests the harmonization of the contrary figures of Jehovah and Jesus. This is not to propose, however, that the two merge; we remember, "Without Contraries is no progression" (181). Rather, we may expect to find the forces of desire and restraint yoked, in a sense, to establish a satisfactory tension between the two. Blake's is "not a God afar off" (435); he is a

"brother and friend:

"Within your bosoms I reside, and you reside in me;

"Lo! we are One, forgiving all Evil, Not seeking recompense.

"Ye are my members, O ye sleepers of Beulah, land of shades!" (435)

Regarding himself the prophet of his age, Blake calls mankind from his wakeful sleep in the land of shadows to consider his God, the source of all:

Reader! lover of books! lover of heaven,
And of that God from whom all things are given,
Who in mysterious Sinai's awful cave
To Man the wondrous art of writing gave:
Again he speaks in thunder and in fire!
Thunder of Thought, & flames of fierce desire:

Even from the depths of Hell his voice I hear
 Within the unfathom'd caverns of my Ear.
 Therefore I print; nor vain my types shall be:
 Heaven, Earth & Hell henceforth shall live in harmony.
 (433)

Hidden within the "unfathom'd" cave of man's mind, this God speaks, through Blake, "in thunder and in fire!" But unlike the Puritanical Urizen which was formerly in control of Blake's Albion, this god freely speaks in "thunder of Thought, & flames of fierce desire." Combining the authority of Jehovah with the energetic power of Jesus found in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Blake is so inspired in his endeavor to reach all mankind, to let all men hear his gospel that he could respond to the voice of his imagination ". . . even from the depths of Hell." He suggests that regardless of the state in which one finds himself, every man has within himself the ability and the responsibility to recognize the Jesus in Albion and, thus, to bring into focus a concept of god in every member of the brotherhood of mankind. Blake evidences his own covenant with mankind--that "Heaven, Earth & Hell henceforth shall live in harmony"--when he says:

"I am in you and you in me, mutual in love divine:
 "Fibers of love from man to man thro' Albions's
 pleasant land." (434)

As I have suggested, both Jehovah and Jesus are essential parts of Albion's experience seeking the light of Divine Vision. Both contribute to that unity achieved when Albion discovers Jerusalem. Blake repeatedly emphasizes

man's need to recognize in others and in himself the divine image in man, the likeness of god as a part of humanity and as essential for eternal life known in Beulah and Eden:

"We live as One Man; for contracting our infinite
senses

"We behold multitude, or expanding, we behold as one,

"As One Man all the Universal Family, and that One
Man

"We call Jesus the Christ; and he in us and we in him

"Live in perfect harmony in Eden, the land of life,

"Giving and receiving, and forgiving each other's
trespasses.

"He is the Good shepherd, he is the Lord and master,

"He is the Shepherd of Albion, he is all in all,

"In Eden, in the garden of God, and in heavenly
Jerusalem." (479)

As "One Man," Jehovah-Jesus both produces and responds to that "voice of One crying in the Wilderness." As the "Good Shepherd of Albion," he willingly leaves the many to find the One lost and bring him into the reviving "garden of God." Revealing both his own creative imagination and his erratic genius, Blake continues his myth presenting men as travellers, as members of Albion, who progress through stages of life into the wilderness, each seeking a new Jerusalem. "Jerusalem," says Blake, "is called Liberty among the Children of Albion" (500). In Blake's thinking, this universal search for liberty achieves eternal brotherhood via the imagination. Any man losing himself in the natural world, straying from the paths of humanity, sleeps in Generation or in Ulro until his struggle winds his way toward understanding Blake's god in Albion who resides in the love of humanity.

The Jehovah of Jerusalem possesses both destructive and beneficial qualities which contribute to Albion's whole being. First, remembering the "leprous hand" that stretched to eternity and that apparently contributed to the resulting chaos, we may associate Jehovah both as the necessary contrary of Jesus within Albion, and as one of the false gods who corrupt man and lead him into Ulro. Urizen-Jehovah is readily likened to any guardsmen who, delighting in their deprivation, keep the liberties of man locked behind their bars of religion and social restraint:

"Molech rejoices thro' the Land . . .

"In moral law & its severe penalties: loud Shaddai &
Jehovah

"Thunder above, when they see the Twelve panting
Victims

"On the Twelve Stones of Power . . ." (524)

Dominated by the laws and instructions of the church and society, man becomes rooted in the earth, the symbol of Blake's state of experience. Like a plant only capable of turning its head to follow the sun, man fails to progress if he experiences desires which he cannot or will not satisfy. The Urizen-dominated churches appealed to man's intellect, the spectre in man coaxing him into the cells of "Laws & Moralities" to extinguish sparks of imagination and individuality:

The Spectre is the Reasoning Power in Man, & when
separated

From Imagination and closing itself as in steel
and in a Ratio

Of the Things of Memory, It thence frames Laws &
Moralities

To destroy Imagination, the Divine Body, by

Martyrdoms & Wars.

Teach me, O Holy Spirit, the Testimony of Jesus!
let me

Comprehend wondrous things out of the Divine Law! (533)

Blake wanted man to be free, thinking before making decisions and following his desires and energies without fear. Unlimited by the natural world, Blake's wisest men were any who were creative and eager to attempt the unknowns of their imaginations. But, when men are instructed by society and limited by her laws, warns Blake, they become spiritually dead. Falling away from universal brotherhood, "his Giant beauty and perfection fallen into dust" (455), Albion grows "cold against the warmth of Eden" (479). Torn with black storms and consumed by the fire within his breast, he endures the pain of his "grave" (476) in experience; and, like the exuberance of Jehovah, Albion's temporary loss of Divine Vision produces

thunders of deadly war (the fever of the human
soul)

Fires and clouds of rolling smoke! (479)

Jehovah also appears frequently in references to the gods of all religions other than the religion of Jesus. Blake realized how easily man strays into pagan religions, which are not only all religions from Druidism to Deism but also all societal delusions. Believing that the "religion of Jesus" (463) is the only true religion and that all others are distortions of it, Blake asks: "Was Britain the Primitive Patriarchal Religion? If it is

true, . . . Jerusalem was & is the Emanation of the Giant Albion" (463):

Ye are united, O ye Inhabitants of Earth, in
One Religion, The Religion of Jesus, the most
Ancient, the Eternal & the Everlasting Gospel
. . . "All things Begin & End in Albion's Ancient
Druid Rocky Shore." (463)

Blake proposes that all religions sprang from Britain, Blake's Albion; and that man either has faith in the religion of Jesus or in some delusion. He concludes: "Albion was the Parent of the Druids, & in his Chaotic State of Sleep, Satan & Adam & the whole World was Created by the Elohim" (463).

According to Blake, "Jehovah stood among the Druids" (513) and contributed to the splitting apart of the Giant Albion, the eternal man. He is the Urizenic-Jehovah, one of Blake's "Giants . . . in Intellect" (496), who perpetuates the customs and traditions of orthodoxy and who inhibits the intellectual independence and religious zeal that Blake advocated. Alienated from their integrity, these Urizenic figures are " . . . given to stony Druids and Allegoric Generation" (496), and are " . . . Sway'd by a Providence oppos'd to the Divine Lord Jesus" (496). Blake does not gently criticize those who listen to the gods who evoke the cries in the wilderness and who cause the torments among the zoas. Part of the separation resulted from the demands made concerning chastity:

"How can the Female be chaste, O thou stupid Druid,"
 Cried Los,
 "Without the Forgiveness of Sins in the merciful
 clouds of Jehovah
 "And without the Baptism of Repentence to wash
 away Calumnies and
 "The Accusations of Sin, that each may be Pure in
 their Neighbour's sight?
 "O when shall Jehovah give us Victims from his
 Flocks & Herds
 "Instead of Human Victims by the Daughters of Albion
 & Cannan?" (514)

Such repression strengthens the "Infernal Veil . . . /
 Which Jesus rends & the whole Druid Law removes away / From
 the Inner Sanctuary, a False Holiness hid within the
 Center" (526). As a poet, Blake desired to rend the veil
 of orthodoxy; he wanted to break the chain of reason
 binding man to a static existence, to challenge blind
 obedience to foolish laws; and he wanted to destroy the
 links! He was opposed to all systems that enslave man or
 that too rigidly categorize the contraries of desire and
 restraint; hence, we must avoid seeing Jehovah and Jesus
 as opposites, who are, rather, parallel forces in man,
 together contributing to his progression.

Blake brings the powers of Jehovah and Jesus together
 when he discusses the forgiveness of sin in Jerusalem.
 Rather than an external deity, Jehovah is a manifestation
 in Joseph who grants Mary forgiveness for what society
 terms sin. Learning that Mary is with Child, Joseph is
 asked by an angel:

"Doth Jehovah Forgive a Debt only on condition that
 it shall

"Be Payed? Doth he Forgive Pollution only on conditions of Purity?
 "That Debt is not Forgiven! That Pollution is not Forgiven!
 "Such is the Forgiveness of the Gods, the Moral Virtues of the
 "Heathen whose tender Mercies are Cruelty. But Jehovah's Salvation
 "Is without Money & without Price, in the Continual Forgiveness of Sins,
 "In the Perpetual Mutual Sacrifice in Great Eternity; for behold,
 "There is none that liveth & Sinneth not! And this is the Covenant
 "Of Jehovah: If you Forgive one-another, so shall Jehovah Forgive you,
 "That he Himself may Dwell among You." (510-511)

Here, Blake's Jehovah is rather like the Jesus presented in Milton, as the divine image in man, desiring to dwell among men rather than to reign over them and demand obedience. He is a forgiving-figure, recognized by Mary in Joseph, for she beholds "with love the Face of Jehovah" (511). When Joseph accepts her, she cries with joyful tears instead of cowering in fear of punishment. And when Mary gives birth to her child, "Jerusalem recieved [sic] / The infant into her hands in the Visions of Jehovah" (511).

Mary had not known before that there was a god of mercy:

"O mercy, O Divine Humanity!
 "O Forgiveness & Pity & Compassion! If I were Pure
 I should never
 "Have known Thee: If I were Unpolluted I should
 never have
 "Glorified thy Holiness or rejoiced in thy great
 Salvation." (511)

Blake comments: "Every Harlot was once a Virgin: every Criminal an Infant Love" (512).

Similarly, we note that Jesus, who is the "imagination" (533) or the "image of his Lord" (499) in Jerusalem, is quite like the Jesus in Milton. Jesus is that quality in man which recognizes the divinity in all men. Through Jesus, man casts off the selfhood of man and achieves a fuller awareness of all that is human. Noting his theme-- "Of the Sleep of Ulro! and of the passage through / Eternal Death! and of the awaking to Eternal Life" (434)-- we might think Blake sounds rather orthodox as he defines "the Spirit of Jesus" (433), if we forget the value revealed in his previous works. He warns man against self-righteousness if he wishes to envision heaven, to achieve Beulah and Eden:

The Spirit of Jesus is continual forgiveness of Sin: he who waits to be righteous before he enters into the Saviour's kingdom, the Divine Body, will never enter there. I am perhaps the most sinful of men. I pretend not to holiness: yet I pretend to love, to see, to converse with daily as man with man, & the more to have an interest in the Friend of Sinners. (433)

Jehovah approaches the more benevolent figure of Jesus as he expresses kind words for wandering Albion:

"The Sun shall go before you in Day, the Moon
shall go
"Before you in Night. Come on! Come on! Come
on! The Lord
"Jehovah is before, behind, above, beneath, around.
"He has builded the arches of Albion's Tomb,
binding the Stars
"In merciful Order, bending the Laws of Cruelty to
Peace. (495)

However, Jehovah's ends do not satisfy his means; he surrounds

Albion, stifling his liberty and still trying to regulate man's life. As did those before him, Jehovah helps to set the stage for Albion's back-turning against Eden and his earlier arm-raising in war against the bindings and darkness of an overwhelming order of peace. Risking complete loss of divine vision as he enters Ulro, Albion flees such restrictions as those proclaimed by Jehovah. Los, angered by the "wars of life, & wounds of love" (479) which are inflicted "with intellectual spears, & long winged arrows of thought" (479), asks why man calls on an extrinsic God for help instead of depending upon himself

. . . in whom God dwells,
 Stretching a hand to save the falling Man.
 . . . the soft smile of friendship & the open dawn
 of benevolence
 Become a net & a trap, & every energy render'd
 cruel,
 Till the existence of friendship & benevolence
 is denied. (487)

Blake condemns the laws which slay the Lamb of God, for in accepting them, the heart becomes so frozen that "the spear that lights it forth may shatter the ribs & bosom. / A pretence of Art to destroy Art; a pretence of Liberty / To destroy Liberty; a pretence of Religion to destroy Religion . . . " (488). This directs our attention to Blake's attitudes about organized religion.

Jehovah is traditionally associated with the Old Testament god who demands obedience and faithful service in return for a promise. Blake saw organized religion as

one of several "oppressors of Albion" (470); it was an institution that taught man the orthodox idea that if he does his duty on earth, if he obediently, and perhaps blindly, adheres to the commandments, he will be loved to a greater degree and he will be more richly rewarded in heaven. Blake could not tolerate this; and he would not refrain from his verbal rebellion against man's blindness to others' needs, man's failure to act on his expressed concern for his fellowmen:

" . . . the Oppressors of Albion in every City and Village.

"They mock at the Labourer's limbs: they mock at his starv'd Children:

"They buy his Daughters that they may have power to sell his Sons:

"They compell the Poor to live upon a crust of bread by soft mild arts:

"They reduce the Man to want, then give with pomp & ceremony:

"The praise of Jehovah is chaunted from lips of hunger & thirt. (470-471)

Jehovah is the ruler demanding faith and making a promise for something to come; he becomes an automatic part of the ritual, a "Chaunt" inciting nothing, merely emotionlessly expressed in the religious services habitually attended by the unthinking, god-fearing masses. Blake spurns those persons "burning, / In love & jealousy immingled, & calling it Religion" (489), as well as those adhering to "Abstract Philosophy warring in enmity against Imagination (Which is the Divine Body of the Lord Jesus, blessed for ever)" (437). Therefore, protesting against the Deists,

in particular, who were proclaiming the orthodoxy of his day, Blake expressed his conviction that these faculties warring in man must achieve harmony with the Jesus in every man if Albion is to attain Jerusalem:

The Religion of Jesus, Forgiveness of Sin, can never be the cause of a War nor of a single Martyrdom. Those who Martyr others or who cause War are Deists, but never can be Forgivers of Sin. The Glory of Christianity is To Conquer by Forgiveness. All the Destruction, therefore, in Christian Europe has arisen from Deism, which is Natural Religion. (498)

There is no doubt that he believed the following statement, also addressed to the Deists:

Man must & will have Some Religion: if he has not the Religion of Jesus, he will have the religion of Satan & will erect the Synagogue of Satan, calling the Prince of this World, God, and destroying all who do not worship Satan under the Name of God. Will any one say, "Where are those who worship Satan under the Name of God?" Where are they? Listen! Every Religion that Preaches Vengeance for Sin is the Religion of the Enemy & Avenger and not of the Forgiver of Sin, and their God is Satan, Named by the Divine Name. Your Religion, O Deists! Deism, is the Worship of the God of this world by the means of what you call Natural Religion and Natural Philosophy, and of Natural Morality or Self-Righteousness, the Selfish Virtues of the Natural Heart. This was the Religion of the Pharisees who murder'd Jesus. Deism is the same & ends in the same. (498)

Representing all that is not of "the Religion of Jesus" (498), Satan is of the state of death, where man is by nature the enemy of man. Created by men who are divided within themselves, inhumanity would extinguish the brilliant fire that lowers but to a small flicker in the souls of men in the state of experience, even Ulro--except for the presence of Jesus: "A Human Vision! / Human

Divine, Jesus the Saviour, blessed for ever and ever" (482):

He wither'd up the Human Form
By laws of sacrifice for sin,
Till it became a Mortal Worm,
But O! translucent all within.

The Divine Vision still was seen,
Still was the Human Form Divine,
Weeping in weak & mortal clay,
O Jesus, still the Form was thine. (465)

Although he becomes a victim of disillusionment, man retains a spark of the fire of divine vision, which is essential to attain the four-fold vision: "if Man ceases to behold, he ceases to exist" (479).

. . . The Man is himself become
A piteous example of oblivion, To teach the Sons
Of Eden that however great and glorious, however
loving
And merciful the Individuality, however high
Our palaces and cities and however fruitful are our
fields,
In Selfhood, we are nothing, but fade away in
morning's breath.
Our mildness is nothing: the greatest mildness we
can use
Is incapable and nothing: none but the Lamb of God
can heal
This dread disease, none but Jesus. O Lord, descend
and save!
Albion's Western Gate is clos'd: his death is
coming apace.
Jesus alone can save him; for alas, we none can
know
How soon his lot may be our own. (490)

Jesus is the purifier of the dreadful disease of Selfhood. When Albion became contaminated by the "leprous" (389) laws of the dominating Urizen-Jehovah, he grew in his Selfhood and, in so doing, cast away his emanation Jerusalem. She, in turn, divided into the jealous Vala, both of whom are banished by Albion while he is in Ulro.

Only Jesus can purge Albion; i.e., Albion must accept Jesus as the Divine Vision, the divinity within himself. Likewise, it is Jesus-in-Albion who recognizes his need to reconcile himself with Jerusalem and Vala and, thus, become unified in the spirit of Jesus. "Without Forgiveness of Sin," reminds Blake, "Love is Itself Eternal Death." (515) Realizing that Selfhood drives him from Jesus into the darkness of Eternal Death, Albion finds comfort in and learns the value of Blake's Jesus, who makes comments such as the following:

"Repose on me till the morning of the Grave. . . .
"I am the Resurrection & the Life. (512)

"I Die & pass the limits of possibility as it
appears

"To individual perception. Luvah must be created

"And Vala, for I cannot leave them in the gnawing
Grave

"But will prepare a way for my banished ones to
return . . . (512)

.. ..
"Fear not Albion: unless I die thou canst not live;

"But if I die I shall rise again & thou with me. Jesus

"This is Friendship & Brotherhood: without it Man
Is Not. (563)

.. ..
"Thus do Men in Eternity

"One for another to put off, by forgiveness, every
sin." (563)

" . . . if God dieth not for Man & giveth not him-
self

"Eternally for Man, Man could not exist; for Man is
Love

"As God is Love: every kindness to another is a
little Death

"In the Divine Image, nor can Man exist but by
Brotherhood. (564)

Jesus surpasses mortality and enables man to envision eternity: "Imagination is Eternity" (584).

The spirit of Jesus in Albion desires a response to the opportunity it affords man: it can evoke an action toward becoming a more imaginative body. It is Jesus who we find "breaking thro' the Central Zones of Death & Hell," opening eternity "in Time and Space, triumphant in Mercy. Thus are the Heavens," Blake clarifies, "form'd by Los within the Mundane Shell" (535). Man need not fear death or an external hell, for, indeed, if he cultivates his "mental gifts" (536) he shall develop the "Spirit which Lives Eternally" (536). This is the spirit of Jesus which pities the evil, heals the spiritually ill, and teaches man true happiness. Through Jesus "Hell is open'd to Heaven . . . / The dungeons burst & the Prisoners set free" (537). Jesus awakes the prisoners of death and brings Albion again with Luvah into the light eternal, into his eternal day.

As Blake's "real man, the imagination" (926), Jesus fulfills the mutual covenant of Jehovah, and he evidences his presence in the "mental gifts" of mankind. Hearing the words--and listening, and seeing a dark cloud rise between his friend and him, Albion willingly sacrifices himself (his "self") for his friend. In so doing, he awakes from his sleep, ends his trek into the wilderness, and stands before "Jesus in the clouds / Of Heaven, Fourfold among the Visions of God in Eternity" (564):

And every Man stood Fourfold; . . . revealing the
 lineaments of Man,
 Driving outward the Body of Death in an Eternal
 Death & Resurrection,
 Awaking it to Life among the Flowers of Beulah,
 rejoicing in Unity
 In the Four Senses, in the Outline, the Circum-
 ference & Form, for ever
 In Forgiveness of Sins which is Self
 Annihilation; it is the Covenant of
 Jehovah. (566)

Jesus is the inherent potentiality in Albion which enables
 him to perceive the infinite in all things; it achieves for
 him the four-fold vision, his unity and his Jerusalem.

Rather than in obeying a god beyond the skies, Blake says:

. . . the Worship of God is honouring his gifts
 In other men & loving the greatest men best, each
 according
 To his Genius which is the Holy Ghost in Man; there
 is no other
 God than that God who is the intellectual fountain
 of Humanity. (557)

Presenting his own gospel as a candle producing its light
 through the "spirit of Jesus," Blake would be a source of
 light for men desiring it in order to find their ways to
 the eternal spring of life.

Jesus is the bright Preacher of Life
 Creating Nature from this fiery Law
 By self-denial & forgiveness of Sin. (537)

Perhaps these lines best focus attention upon Blake's inter-
 pretation of god in Jerusalem, for Blake indicates the
 harmonious powers of both Jehovah and Jesus within Blake's
 whole man, Jesus as Albion. Too briefly, Jesus is the
 imagination in man which is one with the loving shepherd
 of Albion's eternal day. Mutually forgiving and denying

self, Albion instinctively and freely creates nature, which is man, evoked by the fire of inspiration tempered by reason. The practices of orthodoxy are in the abstract for Blake; the only reality, for him, is to be found in the divine image, his "real man, the imagination" (926):

. . . I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty both of body & mind to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination, Imagination, the real & eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint shadow, & in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more. (535)

What is the talent that it is a curse to hide other than a "mental gift" he asks. What is mortality but those things relating to "the Body which Dies"? What is immortality but those things relating to "the Spirit which Lives Eternally"? The joys of heaven are improvements of the things of the spirit; the pains of hell, he continues, are "Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness & devastation of the things of the Spirit" (536).

He who despises & mocks a Mental Gift in another, calling it pride & selfishness & sin, mocks Jesus the giver of every Mental Gift, which always appear to the ignorance-loving Hypocrite as Sins; but that which is a Sin in the sight of cruel Man is not so in the sight of our kind God. (536)

Blake's personal conviction of the God in man is evidenced throughout his work. If God is spirit and truth, he asks, is he any other than everything to man? Any man writing from his heart must intend truth; so all philosophies proceed from the same source and are valuable according to

the strengths and weaknesses of the individual. His faith and his ability to express it enable him, like Albion, to bring life to life; and, to create in himself and to recognize in others the divine image. Both Jehovah and Jesus are present in the expressions and actions of the whole man Albion. Together, they in him are Blake's god: "the Four Living Creatures as one Man . . . All human Forms . . . total living, going forth & returning wearied . . . Awaking into his Bosom in the Life of Immortality" (567). Albion is that four-fold unity, Blake's "real man, the imagination," in whom Jehovah has come to represent the Intellectual Fountain of Humanity, the source of love which, once discovered and shared by everyman will free all mankind and unify Albion as one brotherhood. Jesus is the means by which this love reaches out to all mankind.

If we take an overview of Blake's work, we find that it represents a turning point in man's perspective. No longer is man looking into the world to find out how he came to be. Quite the contrary, he is asserting to the world that he is its significance and only through him will it continue. Blake's question from a very early work, the Ghost of Abel, is applicable today:

What doest thou here Elijah? Can a poet doubt the Vision of Jehovah? Nature has no Outline, but Imagination has. Nature has no tune, but Imagination has. Nature has no supernatural and dissolves: Imagination is Eternity. (584)

At any point along life's road, man might answer--"I'm which

seeking freedom." The desire for freedom burns in every man: freedom to question, to think, to desire, to act, and to imagine. This fire in man will not be extinguished; and it is this flame in Blake's works that blazes more brightly today than in his own time as we learn to appreciate the genius of this man. Just as Blake interlocked his artistic skills in each of his works to translate his vision of total man, so do all of his works interlock to relate every man's progression toward Jerusalem.

Blake shares with his readers his desire for freedom. My examination of Blake's uses of the terms Jehovah and Jesus in his major epics provides insight into the nature of his god: a freedom-giving god. It reveals a progression from an external law-giver in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell to a god of inner discipline in Jerusalem. Blake keenly felt the conflict between the orthodoxy of his day and his desire to be free in his beliefs. This conflict is the core of his Marriage of Heaven and Hell. In his search for an imaginative faith, he turned away from the structure of the church, which had become more important than the individual members of the church; he threw down the "stones of law" imprisoning man, and he broke through the "bricks of Religion" to create in his own heart a relationship with his god. By working in the "infernal method," both in his engraving and in his poetry, Blake leads man to an awareness of his inherent potentiality which

enables him to perceive the infinite in all things. It is this in Albion which achieves his unity, his Jerusalem, his imagination. One desiring to know the Divinity, says Blake, must recognize the divine image in his children; first, in friendship and love, and then as parts of the divine family:

. . . in the midst
Jesus will appear; so he who wishes to
see a Vision, a perfect Whole,
Must see it in Minute Particulars
Organized . . .
General Forms have their vitality in
Particulars, & every
Particular is a Man, a Divine Member
of the Divine Jesus. (558)

In The Marriage of Heaven and Hell, Jehovah and Jesus are two forces, reason and desire, representing the opposing law-giver and the liberator of man. The former rigidly stands for intellect, power, and might; the latter, for love, compassion, and pity. The one requires obedience to his rules; the other rebels against restraint, desiring to escape from law. Blake's Jesus, like the traditional Jesus, frees man from the God of the Old Testament and challenges man to reexamine the traditional duality of organized religion. Rather than good dominating evil, the forces are yoked, pulling against each other, then one and the other, and finally the harmonious team. Man must learn to accept the presence of different forces, varying powers, which can parallel and mutually contribute to mankind. However, Blake recognizes the "vitality in the Particulars"; a man wants freedom to decide his own sense of values. Then, achieving

a balance of the contraries within him, every man may contribute as effectively as he can to the society which he and his fellowmen are.

In The Four Zoas, the conflict becomes more complex. Jehovah and Jesus are two of the four faculties of man: instinct, love, reason, and imagination. As a man moves out of childhood into adulthood, as he progresses from innocence into experience, he realizes that good and evil are not the only two categories in the experience of man. No longer faced with only two choices, either good or evil, man's complexity requires reckoning with more specific "particulars" or drives which motivate him in different directions. These are the "Four Mighty Ones . . . in every man; a Perfect Unity." However, Jehovah becomes Urizen, usurping control of the other faculties and demanding obedience much like the Jehovah in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell; and Jesus is a representative of the state of Luvah. Unlike the rebellious son of the Marriage, he is a more benevolent figure even while claiming his freedom to act upon his desires and to express his energies without fear of punishment. As the light of Divine Vision, the imagination, he is a companion of imaginative forms in the state of experience; as the Lamb of God, he represents the Divine Family in Eternity and foreshadows the atonement of Albion. By examining the essential components of Albion and by discussing the functions of each, Blake explains the

necessity that these work in harmony to reveal man's humanity. When the faculties get out of proportion, man loses his freedom; he is no longer a self-determining person.

Milton exemplifies the result of the loss of the balance among the four faculties of man. The Urizenic-Jehovah is the god who dresses man in garments of moral and religious laws, veiling him from the light of Divine Vision. Although he is still a part of the darkness in Albion's world, Jehovah reveals his potential to work with Jesus for the total man. Jesus is associated with Los, the power of the imagination which may be recognized by mankind as a source of inner strength. Through Milton, Blake illustrates the ability of man to discover his own humanity and to see in others as well as in himself the "image of the Invisible God." Milton recognizes his former obedience to "Satan's Tyranny" and finds that he may burst the chains of orthodoxy and regain his freedom to participate in Blake's imaginative faith in the divinity of man.

In Jerusalem, Blake's juxtaposition of the characteristics of Jehovah and Jesus presented in The Marriage of Heaven and Hell signifies both the intent and the unity of his whole gospel: to present a perfect vision of man. Both of the former contraries contribute to the unity that is achieved when Albion discovers Jerusalem and Blake's "Testimony of Jesus." Similarly, it is in his own "Jerusalem" that each man discovers the divine image in himself

and in others and that he attains freedom. Having satisfactorily learned how to contend with the Jehovah-Jesus characteristics in his being, he becomes a self-determining form.

As in his engraving, which reveals his design by "melting apparent surfaces away, and displaying the infinite which was hid," Blake reveals in his major epics the means by which man may rid himself of "apparent surfaces" and display the infinite--his humanity--to his fellowman. According to Blake, every man must create his own humanity. His work alerts us to the morning of our imaginations and challenges us to meet the responsibility of mankind. Anticipating many of the ideas prevalent in the twentieth century, his work is now more widely read and acceptable than in his own day; and, his ideas contribute to that understanding man has been seeking and will continue to seek eternally. Modern man is still making treks into the wilderness; there, in Blake's system, everyman is able to follow his own path, to discover his own "Jerusalem" when he frees himself from his "Self" and recognizes the divine image in his fellowman.

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