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26.1. The Book of Tobit (Tobias).

Let us begin with excerpts from the Book of Tobit (Tobias). It concerns Sarah (Sarrra). *Tob. 3:8* says: “Sarah had already been given in marriage to seven men, but the evil demon Asmodaus (Asmodeus) killed them before they had had intercourse with her.”

Tob 6:16: “Do not worry about that demon: tonight Sarah will be given to you in marriage. (...) Take the censer , put the piece of the heart and the liver of the fish on the glowing ashes: as soon as the demon smells the smoke, he will flee never to return,” says the archangel Raphael (*Tob. 12:15*).

In other words: it is more than a series ('seven' is an ancient number) of natural deaths. An exorcistic rite is involved. When Tobias performs the recommended ritual on the wedding night, it reads: “He took the incense burner and placed the heart of the fish and the liver on the glowing ashes, and smoke arose. When the demon noticed this, he fled to Upper Egypt, where the angel (Raphael) put him in chains.”

Another translation lifts the veil: “the angel Raphael bound him in the desert of Upper Egypt.” If one knows the occult significance of both ancient Egypt for Israel and the desert as the dwelling place of demonic beings (cf. *Matthew 12:43* , where it is said that an expelled unclean (God-hostile) spirit

roams in arid places), then that second translation sheds a clear light on the event.

Incidentally, *Mark 1:12/13* says that Jesus, once baptized, is driven by the Spirit into the wilderness, where he dwells among the wild beasts and is tempted by Satan.

As for Egypt, this was not only the land where the people of Israel endured very harsh slavery, but also and above all a people who paid homage *to the religion of the 'nations'* ('Gentiles': *Deuteronomy 18:9 (13)*) which were an 'abomination' as the prophets put it.

Could there be a remnant of Egyptian magic in the background of the story such that Sarah is tormented by an erotic demon? Given the entire Biblical context, it is conceivable. In any case, *Tob. 6:14 ff.* states that the demon does Sarah no harm because he approaches her erotically, and kills every man she approaches for the marriage bed. The liberation from the grip of that sexy demon is called *Tob. 3:17* "the healing of Sarah," where the term 'healing' certainly has more than just a medical meaning.

In summary: in at least one instance, the biblical world features an erotic approach by an angel or a demon towards a woman on earth, with or without the fault of the woman in question. With this in mind, we now consider the following Bible texts.

26.2. Genesis 6:1/5.

When people began to multiply on the earth and were born in daughters, sons of God found (*note:* Sons of God are high, spirits who dwell in God's presence, angels (*Job 4:18; especially 1:6, 2:1*) that these "fit with them": They took as wives all the young women who attracted them.

To which Yahweh replied: "My spirit (note: supernatural life force, basis of immortality) shall not remain in man since he is flesh (*note:* earthly life force that entails mortality). At most, he will live 120 years." The Nephilim were on earth in those days (and also since then), when precisely the sons of God became one with the daughters of men and the latter bore their children. This concerns the powerful men of old, the notorious men.

Thus Yahweh saw that the degeneration of man on earth was great and that he was bent on evil day in and day out. Yahweh regretted that he had created man on earth and suffered sorrow. He said: "I am going to destroy

man whom I have made from the earth—man, and at the same time the cattle, the creeping creatures, the birds in the heavens, for I regret having made them. But Noah found favor in Yahweh's eyes (...).

Behold what the Bible calls “the days of Noah ”.

Note: One clearly sees the same underlying structure that ruined Sarah's life, but with the difference that the angels—in Biblical terminology: unclean (god-estranged) spirits or demons—influence the conception process in such a way that the children share in the demonic nature of the sons of God by displaying a higher degree of life force.

In other words, during conception, the sons of God inserted a kind of soul-body into the child that represented their element.

One can, of course, always reject such a type of fertilization in the name of modern biology, but this does not prevent the fact that, given the limitations of predominantly physically reasoned biology, what the Bible tells is in itself possible, especially as soon as one posits the phenomenon of possession. This is all the more so since possessions not infrequently contain a strong erotic element.

Was it the case, for example, that the intervening Son of God himself incarnated, like an avatar in India? Or did he limit himself to a soul body that enriched the child's soul with his life force?

In any case, humanity at that time must have experienced the phenomenon as “new children,” for tradition has preserved a generic name for them, namely Nephilim.

As the Biblical writer depicts the situation, it is clear that the Sons of God were of a very questionable, though very remarkable, type: general moral decay goes hand in hand with the cultural heroes that the Nephilim were. This moral decay, due to a lack of God's Spirit—that is, God's supernatural life force—provokes a flood, that is, the overwhelming of natural forces that encounter only earthly life force, whether or not supplemented by the life force of the Sons of God and their descendants.

Genesis 18:1/33 - 19:1/29 .

We summarize to make the term “the days of Lot” understandable. Abraham experiences an appearance of Yahweh, accompanied by two 'men'

(whom *Gen. 19/1* calls angels). Together they appear as “three men”. Abraham only gradually discovers who the “three men” actually are.

Folk as the story is, it describes the reason for Abraham's calling. This resembles that of Noah : “Loudly rises the cry for vengeance (*note*: Biblical term for the restoration of moral order) from Sodom and Gomorrah . Extremely grave is their sin.”

The two men who set out for Sodoma (also: Sodom) are the judges of the moral condition there, while Yahweh, the first of the three men, remains at the place.

Note: We are dealing here with an application of the Biblical concept of “vengeful sin,” which is a moral misconduct that provoked some form of sanction during earthly life. The reason lies in the transgressive nature of the evil committed.

The two angels arrive in Sodom and meet Lot, who offers them hospitality. “The men of the city surround Lot’s house—the men of Sodom , young and old, the whole people to the last: ‘Where are the men—’ they cry to Lot—who arrived with you this evening? Bring them out to us so that we may have intercourse with them.” (*Genesis 19:4/5*). That is what the expression “the days of Lot” means. Homosexuality was widespread in Canaan, but also in Israel, as an abomination to the Gentiles.

The story continues:

Lot goes outside, closes the door behind him, and proposes to have his two daughters “who are still virgins” abused on account of the hospitality he has extended to the two men. Guests were, after all, 'holy,' and Lot proposes to respect that inviolability, linked to his hospitality.

The Sodomites pressed upon Lot and wanted to break down the door. “But the two men stretched out their hands, pulled Lot inside, and locked the door. But the Sodomite men who stood right before the front door—from the smallest to the largest—they struck with astonishment so that they could not find the entrance (cf. *2 Kings 6:18* , where Yahweh strikes the Arameans with blindness)”. (*Gen. 19:10/11*). Those were “the days of Lot”.

Note : One sees that homosexuality took on extreme—we would say 'nihilistic' today—forms and imposed a dominant stamp on the people and their culture.

26.3. Then follows the judgment of God.

The two angels urged Lot and some of his companions to flee the city in haste: “As soon as the sun had risen and Lot had arrived in Zoars (a small town), Yahweh caused sulfur and fire to rain down “from heaven” upon Sodom and Gomorrah . (...). Abraham looked down upon Sodom and Gomorrah and the whole Jordan region and saw a fume rising from the earth like the smoke of a smelting furnace. (...)”. (*Gen. 19:23/28*). - This divine judgment continues to echo throughout the Bible (in the New Testament *Matt. 10:15; 11:23/24; Luke 17:28; ff. 2 Peter 2:6; Jude 7*).

The Noahic judgment of God is called the Flood.

Gen. 6:13; 9:17. - “There was a flood over the earth for forty days.” (*Gen. 7:17*). - What stands out in both divine judgments following outrageous behavior is the exceptional nature of the natural catastrophes. Once again: in Sodom , Gomorrah , and the surrounding areas, too, the forces of nature do not encounter people who radiate God’s Spirit, His supernatural life force, and thus control natural disasters—the bond of “friendship with God/landscape” is a fundamental given throughout the Bible, as *Romans 8:14/27* states very clearly—but rather 'flesh,' that 'people' alienated all too much from God’s commandments and thereby abandoned to death.

26.4. The Biblical metonymy regarding God's guidance of creation.

It will have come to the readers' attention that we attribute natural disasters to a lack of appropriate life force. We are taking a break.

The tropics

These are a figure of speech that relies on resemblance as a metaphor and on coherence as a metonymy. That resemblance or coherence is the strictly logical premise of a comparison which, if expressed in abbreviated form, becomes a trope. Thus: that man resembles a tree (he is so impressive); “that tree of a man” (metaphor). Thus: that man has a beard (which stands out); “the beard is there” (metonymy).

Well, the biblical language is strikingly theocentric.

Everything that happens, for example, is attributed to God as the cause. This connection “God (cause)/event (e.g. natural disaster)” leads to speaking about God metonymically.

Thus: “Yahweh rained down sulfur and fire from heaven upon Sodom and Gomorrah ” means that—ultimately, i.e., on the metaphysical background that is the basis of metonymy—the rain of sulfur and fire, which is primarily a natural disaster, is directly, understand: abbreviated, i.e., metonymically, attributed to God, where only his autonomous nature created by him is at work.

26.5. The Epistle to the Galatians

This letter states it very clearly:

“Whatever a person sows, that he shall also reap. Whoever sows in the flesh shall reap corruption from the flesh, but whoever sows in that spirit (*note*: God’s life-giving force reaching beyond nature) shall reap eternal life in that spirit.” (*Gal. 6:7/8*).

In Noah's or in Lot's days, people sowed—in a transgressive and therefore outrageous manner—in the flesh, and with destruction, they mysteriously reaped from that 'flesh,' a life force that does not even survive natural disasters, let alone live eternally with God after death.

The disadvantage of Biblical abbreviated (actually metonymic) speaking:

1. God is mentioned but speaks of the autonomous creative order created by him and of a natural order,

2. but constantly gives the superficial reader the impression that God is at work everywhere directly and purely. No: he works through the life force of the creatures who find themselves in a sometimes very dangerous situation, such as a secretly bubbling lava flow or any natural disaster whatsoever.

The dynamic aspect that God has placed in creation (and which stands or falls with the concept of life force (*dunamis* in ancient Greek, as *Luke 8:46* says, for example)), is one of the most fundamental ideas in Biblical revelation.

Angels . - In the story of Noah , apostate angels play an active sexual role (as in Sarah's life, but differently). In the story of Lot, two angels also play a role, but as persons who are friends with God and narrowly escape the homosexual desires of the Sodomites . Note that in Lot's story, it is not so much homosexuality itself that is central, but primarily its massive presence and its savage audacity, together with the sacrilegious attitude towards the

two high angels close to God. This is often overlooked by a number of interpreters of the text.

The aftermath of the previous stories.

We begin with the words Luke puts in Jesus' mouth (Luke 17:26/30). "As it was in the days of Noah , so will it be in the days of the Son of Man (Jesus): people ate and drank, married and were given in marriage until the day Noah entered the ark and the flood came and destroyed them all. Or as it was in the days of Lot: people ate and drank, bought and sold, planted and married, but on the day Lot left Sodom , God rained fire and sulfur down from heaven and destroyed them all. So will it be on the day the Son of Man appears."

Jesus speaks of his return in power "at the end of times". What stands out is that, according to Jesus, there will be a very similar situation that provokes Jesus' return in power, that in the form of a divine judgment—a divine judgment that entails the annihilation of people without the resilience inherent in God's Spirit (life force calculated above nature).

In doing so, Jesus emphasizes what ancient Greek tragedy exhibits, namely tragic irony: the people in question will, as in the days of Noah and Lot, not even be aware of what hangs over their heads—so numb will they be and unaware of the actual situation.

Does Jesus' twofold example imply that sexuality will also play a leading role in his day? This is not immediately apparent from what he predicts, but it is difficult to escape the impression that it will be so.

In other words: people really do not change in the course of the evolution of sacred and salvation history. Jesus' first 'appearance' in Israel two millennia ago seems to have caused no noteworthy improvement.

Incidentally: the days of the coming Son of Man are described in much greater detail in *Paul's second letter to the Thessalonians* (2 Thess. 1:6 / 2:14), where the great apostasy that is coming is laid bare. Even at Jesus' return—it seems—only a (small?) portion of people will continue to believe.

26.6. Peter's letter. 2 Peter 2:4/5.

Encapsulated in a ruthless little chapter about false teachers of the time, Peter says what follows.

First general .

God did not spare the angels who acted unscrupulously, but placed them in Tartarus (*note*: the deep underworld) and delivered them to the abysses of darkness where they are stored up for the judgment (*note*: the final judgment in the end times). Peter means to say: no better fate awaits the a- and immoral false teachers than that of those high sons of God who behave so terribly.

26.7. The days of Noah and Lot

Then the pair we know: the days of Noah and Lot.

The days of Noah .

God did not spare the old world (*note*: which existed before the Flood). However, he did save “eight persons,” including Noah , a proponent of conscientious conduct, from destruction, while he unleashed the Flood upon a world of the godless .

Lot's days.

God reduced the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah to ashes and condemned them to destruction, but saved Lot, the conscientious one, who suffered under the excesses of wicked people.

Once again, Peter summarizes.

The Lord carries out the sifting: He manages to save consecrated people from the ordeal of strength, but He places godless people in custody with a view to their punishment on the day of the (*note* : final) judgment, in the first place those who, driven by desires alienated from God, follow the 'flesh' (*note*: the earthly life force) and reject the Lord. - We are faced here with what Paul writes (*Galatians 6:7/8*): “Whoever sows in the flesh will reap destruction from that fear; whoever sows in the spirit will reap eternal life from the spirit.” But with the strong theocentric emphasis on God as the cause of that sifting of judgment.

26.8. Jesus' descent into hell.

1 Peter 3:18/20. - Once dead on the cross, Jesus possesses the full measure of 'spirit', that is, supernatural life force, and descends first of all 'to hell' (as our creed says), that is, to the spirits in the dungeon (of the underworld) to proclaim the good news to them, - to those who at that time had refused to believe - when God's patience assumed a waiting attitude - in the days of Noah . There is debate about the correct interpretation of the imprisoned spirits: are they demons or his deceased people who underwent

the flood? In any case: Peter's text shows God's willingness, who does not hesitate to let Jesus' good news, which he had made known on earth, resound in the dungeon, in order to act as a savior there as well.

For those who look up in wonder.

For those who look up in wonder at God's presence and Jesus' descent into the underworld (the so-called hell), the following.

Wisdom 11:21 reads: “You, God, spare everything because it is Yours, You, lover of all that lives. For Your immortal Spirit is in everything, and for that very reason You punish those who are unscrupulous only moderately. Specifically: You hold their crime before their eyes by that form of warning, so that they refrain from unscrupulous behavior and remain faithful to You.” For example, those who practice unscrupulous magic (as *Ezekiel 13:17/23* describes), who perform child sacrifices (against which the Bible has consistently opposed), consume human flesh and blood, and practice such extreme forms of deviation from the Ten Commandments, are not fundamentally rejected by the so-called Old Testament God: “Yet You treated them graciously, because they were human” (*Wisdom 12:8*).

Epistle of Judas.

Jude 6/7. Once again within the framework of the false teachers of that time. - The Days of Noah . “As for the angels who did not live up to their potential in the higher ranks but have denied their very nature: it is with a view to the judgment of “the Great Day” (*note*: the final judgment when Jesus, in power this time, returns) that God has shackled them in everlasting chains in the deepest part of “the darkness”.

It is clear: this concerns extreme evil plus the eternal will to persist with it, notwithstanding, for example, Jesus' proclamation of the good news there as well. In Biblical terms, this is not merely flesh (behavior deviating from God and His commandment) but both its extreme forms and the eternal will to continue with it—flesh in the extremely persistent degree that rejects even Jesus' offer without ever thinking of repentance.

The days of Lot. “Likewise, Sodom , Gomorrah , and the surrounding cities that surrendered themselves to sex in the same manner (as the angels just mentioned) and also sought other flesh, were made an example of punishment by “the eternal fire”.

In other words: just like the angels in Noah's days, Lot's contemporaries committed an abomination, namely, they sought not only human flesh but “other flesh”, namely that of the two 'men', understand two 'angels'. They committed adultery in the sphere of high spirits friendly with God, or rather, in their sexual frenzy, they attempted to do so.

Behold how, up to and including the very brief note of the Apostle Jude, the days of Noah and Lot lived out in the New Testament with extreme deviations, followed by extreme natural phenomena.

The basic pair of opposites.

From Genesis 6:3 in a very explicit manner (“My spirit (*note*: life force outstanding above the cosmic-biological life force) will not remain in mankind forever since it is flesh (*note*: cosmic-biological life force”)) up to and including John 3:6 (“What is born in flesh is flesh. What is born of the spirit (*note*: of God) is spirit”), the contrasting pair “(God’s) spirit/(cosmic-biological) flesh” dominates Biblical thought as an axiom from which virtually all truly important texts in the entire Bible can be derived.

26.9. The Great Turning

This turn forward, towards a new and glorious future—is what the prophet Jeremiah , following in the footsteps of his predecessors, predicted:

1. forgiveness for the unscrupulous acts and
2. The establishment of a new covenant in which every individual is led directly (without intermediaries or beings) by God from within. This turning point is called 'great' because God's Spirit comes through on a larger scale than ever before precisely through that twofold divine intervention.

Jesus' ministry, culminating in his death on the cross and the subsequent resurrection, is a large-scale elaboration of Jeremiah's future perspective . Jesus says it literally at the Last Supper (the first Eucharistic celebration): “This is (my body) my blood of the new covenant, for 'many' (*note*: countless) for the forgiveness of sins”.

The two aspects

1. Forgiveness and 2. new covenant – are very clearly essential to the Eucharistic event, which presents Jesus' exemplary transition from death (flesh) to life (Spirit of God) as a 'mystery'.

Eternal death.

Heb. 10:26/31) establishes with the other New Testament witnesses : even among those who hear Jesus' ministry and his message, there are those who belittle or even thoroughly reject that transition from cosmic biological life ('flesh') to the resurrection energy (Spirit). Such, for example, was a portion of the false teachers of that time.

Not that 'flesh' was absolute evil (and for those unfamiliar with the Biblical message, isn't). Far from it! The entire pagan sacred world lives off it. But whoever limits themselves to that remains stuck in a life that ends in death. Whoever not only limits themselves to that but decisively refuses the resurrection-life-power offered through Jesus and the Holy Trinity, indeed rejects it for all eternity (God knows for what reasons), falls into what the Bible calls, in clearly understandable terms, “eternal death,” that is, remaining stuck in a life that constantly ends in death (along with the rest).

26.10. The post-Christian stage.

The term is on many people's lips. However, let us examine what the Bible says in this regard . The clearest text is *1 John 5:16/17* . “When one sees a fellow believer ('brother') acting unscrupulously, but in such a way that this is not 'leading to death,' then it is a duty to pray, and one shall grant life to all who do not act unscrupulously 'leading to death.' For there is unscrupulous action that is 'leading to death': I am not saying that praying for such action is a duty. Specifically: every deviation from the order of conscience is unscrupulousness, but not always 'leading to death.'”

The basic pair of opposites “life/death”

The basic pair of contrasts “life/death” in the Biblical sense is clear. Life is possessing God’s resurrection life within oneself. Death is lacking that resurrection life. In other words: the pair of contrasts 'flesh' (in the extreme and sustained degree) / spirit (God’s life force that transcends the cosmic biological level).

Commentators refer here to *Matthew 12:31/32* . Whoever, for example, disapproves of Jesus commits an error of judgment that is open to forgiveness by God: for he is indeed the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, but this is not universally clearly perceptible. But whoever rejects the Holy Spirit, which is God’s primal life-force, if it is clearly perceived as such, commits an act of unscrupulousness for which forgiveness is possible neither in this world nor in the other. Such unscrupulous conduct leads “to death”.

Interpreters of the resurrection here also refer to *2 Peter 2:20/22* (a believer returns to paganism) - to *Hebrews 10:26/31* and *6:4/6* (believers who deliberately renounce their faith).

One must handle these texts with caution: they metonymically attribute directly to God what the apostates arbitrarily, but contrary to God's evidently supernatural intervention, inflict upon themselves, namely: rejecting 'death' in the sense of the resurrection that Jesus very clearly demonstrated as the gateway to an eternal life freed from all dying.

Disapproving of Christendom as it has been seen for two thousand years is partly justified, partly 'unrighteous' (it also did much good). For that 'unrighteousness' there is forgiveness from God. It is not unto death. But rejecting God's direct working in and through Christendom self-assuredly and without seriously addressing the true grounds of that rejection brings it into the sphere of sin against the Holy Spirit.

In other words: anyone who wishes to be post-Christian may do so insofar as they have valid reasons for doing so, but insofar as this occurs without justification, it raises the issue of unfounded apostasy discussed in the Bible texts cited above. It also immediately raises the question of whether prayer for such a thing still makes sense, as Saint John insinuates. But judging that transcends our earthly understanding.

26.11. A way out?

The Holy Scripture, Utrecht-Brussels, 1948, Part II. (The New Testament, 301, no. 5) contains a way out.

1. Guilty apostasy (understand: apostasy if guilty, i.e., without sufficient reason) is already a sin against the Holy Spirit, not eligible for forgiveness.

2. Unless—so says the note—by a very special act of God's mercy, because we ourselves, through our apostasy, have knowingly and willfully deprived ourselves of the means that is conversion.

This is followed by a comparative argument: just as God would have to show a special mercy (and, as it were, cause a miracle in the order of grace) to bring such people to repentance, so too would we have to perform a more than ordinary act of charity (and pray so fervently for them that God performs this miracle of mercy). Although such sinners have no strict right to such a special proof of charity, we are nevertheless not forbidden to pray for them.

On the contrary: love knows no boundaries, and it is the highest act of love to continue praying to God for those unfortunate people. That concludes this note. Praying for them is not a duty, as Saint John says, but one can do so nonetheless.

Incidentally: this language is found in the theological texts of the veneration of the Sacred Heart, which speak of “an excess of mercy from God”.

The rich young man .

“Good Master, what must I do to obtain eternal life?” This is how Jesus is addressed by a very rich man (*Luke 18:18/28*).

1. “No one is good (*note*: in the fundamental sense) except God alone,” answers Jesus.

2. “You know the commandments: you shall not commit adultery, nor murder, nor steal, nor bear false witness; you shall honor your father and mother.” “I have done this from my youth.” When Jesus heard this, he said: “One thing you still lack: sell all that you own, give it to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven (*note*: the resurrection life). Come then and follow me.” When the man heard this, he was disappointed, for he was very rich.

To which Jesus replied: “How difficult it will be for those who possess riches to enter the Kingdom of God! It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God.” - The listeners: “Who, then, can be saved?” Jesus: “What is impossible for men is possible with God.” Apparently, the rich man was facing treatment “to death” (to use St. John ’s terminology). And yet, there is a way out: could the theological footnote mentioned above not be the correct explanation for Jesus’ “is possible with God”? Immediately, this could be the explanation for Jesus’ descent into hell immediately after his death on the cross, in order to bring the good news there as well.