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GOD on GOD

What On Earth Was He Thinking?

Scott McGregor

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By Scott McGregor

Design by Giselle LeFavre

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Introduction

Ever wonder why? Yes, why? Why this, why that, why the other thing? If you have, I am sure you have that in common with the vast majority of others of the human race ever since time began.

So who has the answers? The only one I know who has the answers to all the whys is God.

Seemed like a dead end to me. But as I thought about it more, a strange notion entered my head. I wonder if God would ever do an interview?

Nonsense! A nasty little voice piped up in the back of my mind. If He was going to, He surely would have done it before now.

It was, of course, an absurd idea. Even if it was possible, who was I to be the one to undertake it?

There were countless people more qualified than me, I felt. I couldn't help but agree that if it was possible it would have been done before.

But the initial thought wouldn't go away.

"So how would I interview God?" I mused.

Noooo! screamed Nasty again. It's a ludicrous idea and you're off your rocker to even give it a second thought.

"Yes, undoubtedly!" I agreed once again.

And so I went about my day trying to forget about the "stupid, idiotic, harebrained" idea. Yet the thought was persistent. But each time it came up, Nasty was there to add another disparaging adjective to the growing list that preceded the idea.

It was after many bouts with Nasty that I was stopped in my tracks as a new thought entered my mind.

You are certainly not having any trouble hearing from Nasty. Why would it be any more difficult to hear from God?

In my mind's eye, I could see that Nasty was just about to let me have it when he seemed to swallow his tongue. There wasn't a word. What had happened to my razor-tongued companion?

He was gone.

Instead, a decidedly nicer voice chimed in. Why not just ask Him and see?

I looked around to make sure no one else was observing what was going on. Thankfully, I was alone.

Go on. Ask Him! Nice Voice urged again.

"Do you really think He would do it?" I asked out loud.

Nothing ventured, nothing gained, came the reply.

So I did and ... well, read for yourself what transpired.

"Hello! Are You There?"

Interview One

Interviewer: Well, here goes! Ah, excuse me. Hello! Are You there? (At this point I think I hear a yes. I feel stupid but proceed.) I wonder if I might have a word with God?

Voice from somewhere: With God! Any special reason?

Interviewer: I'd like to ask Him some questions, if I may.

Voice again: Questions? What questions?

Interviewer: Rather a lot, I'm afraid. I wonder if He might be free to do ... well ... like an interview or something.

Voice which I now dubbed "Secretary": So is it an interview or a "something"?

Interviewer: An interview. Yes, an interview. (A bit more boldness was starting to come to me.)

Secretary: Well, that's a first! Back in a jiffy!

(A jiffy, I thought. I guess Heaven is timeless. Someone needs to update the secretary on what's in and what's old in the English language.)

Secretary: God says He's been expecting you. Go ahead!

Interviewer: So He is here?

Secretary: Sure is. Ask away!

Interviewer: Okay! Uh ... hello! I am very honored to be able to ask these questions and that You are able to take the time for this interview.

God: I am very pleased to be able to. It has taken awhile to get through to you on this and to get you this far.

Interviewer: You mean that this was Your idea?

God: Did you think it was yours?

Interviewer: I must admit that I thought it was a bit off the wall at first.

God: Like you were off your rocker or something?

Interviewer: You could say that.

God: So now that we have straightened that out, do you want to get started?

Interviewer: Sure, if it's okay with You.

God: No time like the present.

Interviewer: Very well. My first question and I think one that most people would like to hear an answer to is: Who are You? Some think of You as a rather old, kindly looking gentleman with a long white beard. Others envision a very stern authoritarian with a large stick in His hand. Others a very nebulous, disinterested entity who has left us to our own fate. What are You really like?

God: I have always regarded the conceptions most of mankind has of Me with a mixture of amusement, puzzlement, and sadness. To best understand Me, it is better not to conceive of Me as a person but rather as the Spirit of love. That is what I am at My essence and that is how My presence is most commonly manifested in the world.

Everyone has been touched by love at some time in his or her life. Think of someone you love or have loved and are loved by in return. Recall how you feel when you are near that person. Now think what that would be like multiplied, not just a few, but very many times over. You now have an idea of what I am like.

Interviewer: So when we feel warm and fuzzy, that's You? Some might take exception to that and think that You are appropriating the love they feel for or from someone.

God: Perhaps some might take exception, but please understand that this is simply a statement of fact. I am not just assigning all your nice, warm, loving feelings to Myself. I am simply stating that love is not just part of Me, but it is Me. I place it in the world so people can have a taste of what I am like. I am love.

Interviewer: You said you are a spirit. Does that mean You don't have human-like features such as a head, legs, arms, etc.?

God: I created man in My likeness, but the part of man that is particularly My likeness is the spirit that dwells within his body. I can and do manifest Myself in the bodily likeness of a man, but I am not limited to that.

Interviewer: So when we see works of art where You are depicted similar to how Jupiter or Zeus of the old Grecian or Roman mythology were depicted, then this is somewhat right?

God: I have never posed for an earthly portrait, but some have seen Me on occasion in a human manifestation. So that sort of representation comes pretty close to how you could imagine Me. But in reality, I would like it if people could get past the human concept and come to understand Me more spiritually.

Interviewer: How would one do that?

God: By seeking to understand My Words to mankind rather than engaging in debate over My appearance and nature.

Interviewer: I see. Yet it is our human nature to be somewhat on the skeptical, analytical side. We like to understand who we are dealing with. Surely You must understand this, since You created humanity?

God: Yes, I do understand, but the reason I created you like this was to see who would rise above the level of skepticism to an attitude of simple belief.

Interviewer: You are talking about faith.

God: Yes, exactly.

Interviewer: But, is faith in fact a good thing? Faith is often manipulated by the unscrupulous. Isn't it better for one to be less gullible and more cautious?

God: I am not talking about being gullible. That is not what faith in Me is supposed to be. Faith is not being duped. Faith is confidence. Faith is knowing.

Interviewer: Okay, now I am going to throw out a question that has been in the back of my mind since this started. How do I know I really am talking to You? I mean, all this could just be in my mind.

God: It could be, but it is not. You need faith.

Interviewer: I know I need faith, but I am wondering if I am just deluded or something.

God: You can check this out by looking at the results.

Interviewer: I am not sure what You mean by results.

God: You can see how this affects you once you sit down and read over the transcript. Does it sound like you're delusional? Or does what you read make sense?

Interviewer: Okay, I'll do that. But what is the test? How do I know that this is not a delusion? Maybe it will all make wonderful sense to me, but once it gets around that I am here talking to You, I can see the commitment papers being drawn up right away.

God: Then you'll just have to let them read what you are hearing and let them make up their own minds. The worst they can think is that you are a harmless kook.

Interviewer: A kook! People are going to think I am a kook? That thought doesn't fill me with a lot of confidence right now.

God: If you are going to worry too much about what people think, then you have gotten into the wrong line of work. Most people whom I have spoken to have been derided by their critics as daft ... or worse.

Interviewer: Oh, no. It has gone from being a kook to me having derisive critics. Life was a lot simpler before this started.

God: Simpler doesn't necessarily mean better.

Interviewer: You're not going to tell me to do anything crazy, are You?

God: What do you mean by crazy?

Interviewer: To go pull some stunt or something.

God: No, I am not in the business of stunts, although I do like to get people's attention.

Interviewer: You have mine right now and I am still feeling pretty awkward about all this.

God: You were the one who requested an interview.

Interviewer: Yes, that's true. But it is because I have lots of questions that I want to get answers on.

God: So ask away.

Interviewer: How can we establish the fact that You are real?

God: The testament to a creator is his creation. Look at what I made. That is the main way you can establish that I am real.

Interviewer: But couldn't the world have created itself?

God: Does that make sense to you?

Interviewer: Well, no. But a lot of intelligent people seem to think it does.

God: Look around you at all the things in your room. Everything that is manufactured has a maker, doesn't it?

Interviewer: Yes, but there are some things that weren't manufactured-like the plant in the corner.

God: But it came from a parent plant, right? It had a maker, so to speak.

Interviewer: Yes, but maybe the ancestor just popped out of the primordial soup at some distant point in time and...

God: Why don't you just relax and have faith?

Interviewer: Is it back to that?

God: Looks like it. Want to stop worrying and start asking some questions?

Interviewer: All right. I asked about what You look like. Perhaps I can ask what You like?

God: If you want to know what I like, just check and see what I made.

Interviewer: One must conclude that You like a lot of different things if we look at the variety of creation. But not all of it is beautiful.

God: In its original state, it is.

Interviewer: That would be wilderness?

God: No, I didn't originally create it wilderness, but if it is not tended, it turns into wilderness.

Interviewer: So You intended humanity to tend the earth?

God: Yes. Looking after the earth was one of the original tasks for humanity.

Interviewer: You say "one of." Are there others?

God: Living in harmony with his fellows and helping each other are also the duties of man.

Interviewer: I assume, from what I have heard, that interacting with You is another?

God: Yes, most definitely.

Interviewer: You said You gave us the job of tending the earth. Did You then intend for man to leave it pretty much as is? Or was it in Your plan for us to improve things?

God: Oh yes! Of course I wanted humanity to improve on what I gave, to make advancements, to learn and to progress.

Interviewer: But aren't You conservative by nature?

God: Explain what you mean by conservative.

Interviewer: One has the opinion that those who are religious tend to be conservative in their views, liking things the way they are and preferring not to change. If You are the main influence in their lives, it would seem by association that You must also be conservative.

God: If by that you mean someone who is resistant to change, then I would have to say that I am anything but conservative. But if you mean someone who holds traditional views, then depending on what the tradition is, I could be regarded as conservative.

Interviewer: So You are and You aren't.

God: I am not someone or something that you can neatly define. I am God and so I do not fit into any of your pigeonholes.

Interviewer: So You like change.

God: Being static and predictable is boring, don't you think?

Interviewer: Well, a bit of predictability is nice. Like the sun coming up in the morning and things like that.

God: You can be sure of that at least. But I don't like things being the same day after day. I prefer to inject variety. I like every sunset to be different from the one the day before. I like every person to be different from the next. The earth is filled with variety and change.

Interviewer: You also talked about being traditional in some respects?

God: A lot has been made of values lately, and, yes, I believe in maintaining values that are good. However, I think people tend to look through rose-colored glasses at the good ol' days. Some things weren't so good then, either.

Interviewer: So what are we to base our standards on?

God: On Me and My Spirit, which is love. Base your actions on whether they are loving or not, and with that rule of thumb you can't go far wrong.

Interviewer: We shouldn't base our standard on things like the Ten Commandments?

God: Would two be easier than ten?

Interviewer: Two?

God: Yes, to love Me and to love others. If you follow those two, then you won't go wrong.

Interviewer: Those are pretty broad.

God: True, but if you stick within their parameters, you will be doing well.

Interviewer: This is something I would like to explore a bit later, if I may. But getting back to Your nature and views, would You put Yourself in the liberal camp at all?

God: I wouldn't put Myself in any camp. You can't put Me in a box and neatly package Me up and say, "Here is God!" I am not in a fishbowl here, with man peering in. But let Me say that I like freedom and I like for humanity to not be bound up in restrictive traditions. I am not a fuddy-duddy.

Interviewer: So are we in the fishbowl?

God: In a way, yes.

Interviewer: That makes it sound as if You keep us like pets or something.

God: If you mean that I love you and want to pamper and care for you, then yes, I am inclined that way. But you are far more than pets. You are created in My image.

Interviewer: You said You are not a fuddy-duddy. I think many people have the impression that You are. We see You by and large being worshiped in reverent and subdued tones, by people dressed and groomed conservatively.

God: Well, let's not be too harsh on people by implying they are fuddy-duddy by the way they dress and act. If people worship Me honestly and truly, from their hearts, then I accept their worship gratefully, but I am not that quiet Myself. I love change, exuberance, excitement. I am not usually for subdued reverence. At times it is good to be still and contemplative, but I certainly don't expect people to be that way all the time in their worship of Me, not even most of the time.

Interviewer: Where did we get it wrong then?

God: It seems like humanity has always liked to have an air of mystique around religious ceremonies, with holy symbols and rituals and hallowed places. There is also within man an innate feeling that religiosity and somberness go together.

Interviewer: And that is not the case?

God: While the spiritual world is mysterious to humanity, I don't require symbols and rituals and somber tones. There is a time and place for seriousness, but overall I want people to be joyous rather than solemn. I would rather have people collapsing from exhaustion because of the exuberance of their worship than falling asleep because they are bored with it.

Interviewer: So we should raise the roof?

God: Why not? Man was created to be happy and for his communion with Me to be happy.

Interviewer: But You did say that there are times to be quiet and contemplative.

God: It is good to stop and get quiet in meditative prayer. Although I love the happiness of joyful singing and praise, it is when people get quiet that they can hear Me talking to them.

Interviewer: How do You do that?

God: Ever feel that inner voice trying to encourage you to do something helpful and beneficial for others? That is My voice, or the voice of My agents.

Interviewer: You have agents?

God: Yes, of course. You don't think I limit all the fun to Myself, do you?

Interviewer: You find talking to humans fun?

God: I love to communicate with people, but I will admit "fun" isn't the word to describe every aspect of it. It can often be hard work.

Interviewer: So who are these "agents" You referred to?

God: There are two general classes of agents that help Me in My work: angels and spirits. Angels are supernatural beings of many sorts with various functions. Spirits are former or future spirits of humans who have or will spend time on earth in a human body. Although they lack some of the power of angels, they have a greater understanding of mankind.

Interviewer: Fascinating!

God: Glad you think so.

Interviewer: I assume these all live in Heaven. Where exactly is that?

God: They all dwell in the spiritual dimension where Heaven is located right now.

Interviewer: You say right now as though that is going to change.

God: It will, somewhat.

Interviewer: And how is that?

God: Eventually Heaven will come to earth.

Interviewer: This is extremely intriguing. What exactly do You mean by "come to earth"?

God: In the course of time, I will transform the earth's surface into a paradise that will surpass even the original Garden of Eden in beauty. Then upon that paradise will descend a city of enormous dimensions. Those who live there will not be confined to living within it, but will be able

to travel throughout all the physical and spiritual realms. The beauty of this city will be unsurpassed.

Interviewer: When will this happen?

God: Over a thousand years from now.

Interviewer: Good Lord, that is a terribly long time to wait!

God: Nice of you to call Me good!

Interviewer: Yes, well, of course that is just an expression. First time I have used that when I actually was talking to the good Lord. But I must say that is a long time to wait.

God: You don't have to wait to live there, but it will be over a thousand years before it comes to earth.

Interviewer: So this ... this city, is going to be Heaven?

God: It is part of Heaven-the central core, so to speak. But it is by no means the be all and end all of Heaven.

Interviewer: It seems You are not telling the full story.

God: It would be impossible to tell the full story here, but I will tell you more about it in a later interview.

Interviewer: A later interview?

God: Yes. We've just made a start here. There is still much to cover. You didn't think you could confine an interview with God to just one sitting, did you?

Interviewer: Why I ... I mean, I never really considered that You would consent to this first interview, let alone come back for another. I am very pleasantly surprised.

God: Life is full of surprises, and I am glad this one was enjoyable.

Interviewer: Then on behalf of my readers, if I ever have any, let me say thank You.

God: You are more than welcome. And I look forward to covering all sorts of issues with you.

Interviewer: It has been a pleasure.

And so my first interview with God was over, with the promise of more to come. I looked over what was said and it seemed to make sense to me. I asked a few others for their opinions, and they also seemed to like it, so I guess I wasn't nuts to try it. I hope you found His answers as fascinating as I did.

Angels and Spirits

Interview Two

Interviewer: In the last interview we touched on a variety of subjects. I hope You don't mind if we try to cover some of these more in depth?

God: Not at all!

Interviewer: One subject that has received a tremendous amount of press and attention in recent years is the subject of angels. It seems every bookstore has walls lined with an endless number of books about them, not to mention the TV shows and even movies. I think this plethora of material about them just leaves most people a bit overwhelmed and unsure of what's truth and what's fiction.

God: I agree.

Interviewer: It would be wonderful if You, being the one who really is the expert on the subject, could set the record straight.

God: I would be happy to. What would you like to know?

Interviewer: For starters, what do they look like?

God: They come in a variety of ... I started to say shapes and sizes, but that hardly does them justice.

Interviewer: So there is a variety. They are not all just the same plain vanilla angels.

God: My goodness, no. Plain vanilla?

Interviewer: I'm sorry! By that I was asking if they are all more or less the same, like if you've seen one you've seen them all. ... Oh, I apologize again.

God: You may have offended a few talking like that. Although they're of the same basic essence, there is an infinite variety of angels, with some having more specialized tasks. Thus their looks and powers vary.

Interviewer: You say powers?

God: Yes, they all have powers, but their powers differ depending on the tasks they fulfill.

Interviewer: And what would be these tasks?

God: For instance, each person on earth is assigned a personal angel to be his or her spiritual guardian.

Interviewer: I can see the good guys having one, but You are saying that even bad people have one?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: Why?

God: I love each and every person, so I assign angels to try to help him or her. Some people don't appreciate it, though, and because of their choices in life, their angels are hard pressed to achieve much good in their lives.

Interviewer: So why have them stick around?

God: To try to help as much as they can. Each person has moments of goodness-even the worst person-and the angels capitalize on that.

Interviewer: So You are saying that things could be much worse if these angels weren't helping?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: It would seem a pretty thankless task in many instances.

God: Indeed, but that is what they are needed to do, so they are content to try to achieve as much good as they can, even when the odds are long.

Interviewer: You use the term "guardian." That would indicate that they have some sort of protective function?

God: Yes. They try as much as possible to protect their charges, but they have to operate within certain boundaries. It helps immensely if they get the cooperation of their charges.

Interviewer: How exactly would that be?

God: If the person they are responsible for operates within the bounds of common sense, that's a start. But much more than that, it helps if their charges make an effort to listen to their guidance.

Interviewer: So the angels are communicating with us?

God: They are most certainly trying to. They do all they can to get through, but it's like calling someone on the phone. It does no good unless the other party answers.

Interviewer: So how does one answer?

God: By stopping to listen. That voice within that you hear is often your angel trying to get through to you. Another word for it is your conscience.

Interviewer: You are saying that the voice of conscience is actually angels?

God: More often than not, yes; or others of My agents. Their voices are not the only ones rattling around in people's heads, but they are certainly some of them and their voices are distinctive.

Interviewer: In what way?

God: They are the ones trying to get you to do the right thing.

Interviewer: In the previous interview, You said this was You speaking to us.

God: It is. Sometimes I speak directly; other times I go through one of My agents, which I explained are angels or spirits that I send.

Interviewer: I would like to ask more about spirits later if I may, but for now let's finish up with angels. Besides guardian angels, what other types of angels are there?

God: Some have more power than others and their types of ministry also vary. Some are known by various names on earth, such as seraphim and cherubim.

Interviewer: Oh, cherubs-the little baby cupid-like angels.

God: That is a complete misconception. In reality, My cherubim are huge, mighty, and carry much responsibility. They are not little babies.

Interviewer: Could You explain more about angels' ministries and how their power varies?

God: Some are the equivalent of soldiers. They are in combat with the forces of evil. There is a war of the worlds going on, with the good angels and good spirits on one side (My side, you might say), and the fallen angels (which are also called demons) and bad spirits on the other side. This is a war unseen by you, but you see its effects. It is a conflict that takes place in the realm of the

spirit, which coexists with your material world. Those in the spirit world can see what is going on in the material, but they are limited in how they can interact with it.

Interviewer: And who's winning the war?

God: The angels! But-and here is a little-understood secret-their ability to overcome depends on the prayers of mankind.

Interviewer: You are saying that we control their powers?

God: Control is not the right word. You supplement and magnify their abilities. They do derive a great deal of power from the material world via your prayers. When you pray for a certain situation, then their ability to intervene in that situation is increased dramatically. And the more effort that you exert in your prayers, the more they can do.

Interviewer: So we should pray to the angels to...

God: No, not to the angels. The prayer is to be directed to Me. The prayers that are prayed are then transformed into spiritual energy and transferred to those angels or spirits involved in helping that situation.

Interviewer: But I think all of us have experienced times when we have prayed-sometimes intensely-for a situation, but it didn't seem to improve.

God: Well, there are many factors involved, and thus things can get rather intricate. However, I think you would have to admit that there are times when you have prayed and there were results. You can't always try to grade Me or the effect of your prayers by their seeming success or failure. All your prayers are effective. Even if the situation doesn't turn out as expected, the prayers were used to affect the outcome in some positive way, whether that is apparent or not. Just think of how badly things could have turned out if you hadn't prayed at all.

Interviewer: Indeed, that is a positive way to look at it. But since good does not always triumph, so to speak, even when there are lots of prayers involved, it does give the impression that You and Your forces are far from omnipotent.

God: That can sometimes be the impression, but I assure you it is not so.

Interviewer: Then it doesn't seem fair to me that bad things happen to innocent people when You could make everything right, supposedly with the tip of Your finger.

God: Why do you assume that the "bad" is indeed bad?

Interviewer: Because it is obvious, or at least it seems obvious, that when innocent people are hurt, maimed, killed, made homeless, or see those close to them receive similar treatment, that it is bad. There seems no good to it at all.

God: That is caused largely by man's inhumanity to man. That is not My doing.

Interviewer: Granted, but You could intervene and stop it.

God: But I have given man free choice. It wouldn't be free if I intervened.

Interviewer: Perhaps this free choice wasn't such a good idea, if because of it there is suffering.

God: Do you think it would be better if I had created man as an automaton, programmed to do exactly what I command?

Interviewer: Well, no, I guess not. You have a point there.

God: I wanted a free being who could choose to love Me and love his fellow man. It was important that man had total freedom to make his own choices, in order to have the ability to love Me and those I put in his path, to do good wholeheartedly and not as a machine. However, many misuse this freedom. They make the wrong choices, and much hurt results.

Interviewer: Are You saying You never interfere when You see people hurting other people?

God: In many cases I have stepped in, particularly in answer to prayers, and prevented more damage being done than would have been done otherwise. This is primarily done through My agents trying to get through to the hearts of the people involved, in order to persuade them to make the right choices that will undo the wrong or prevent it from happening in the first place. But if people refuse to listen, there's not that much we up here can do. I don't force people to do good, or again, it wouldn't be free choice anymore.

Interviewer: Well, I still don't understand why You can't interfere more when You see extreme suffering. It seems that people would appreciate it.

God: I sympathize entirely with those who hold this misconception. I know it is very hard to understand. It has been the thing that people have cursed Me for from the beginning of time: "Why, God, why? If You are great and powerful, You could have done something." But they feel this way because they are shortsighted.

I do try to influence people to do good-as I just explained-or things would be much worse than they are. But in other cases, people don't understand that often by allowing difficulties and hardships I am working in their lives and the lives of all the others involved to bring about a greater good. Difficulties can shape your character for good in ways that nothing else can. Sometimes the good manifests itself right away; other times it's something that may never be evident in your current life.

Interviewer: Current life? What do You mean by that?

God: This life is not the end. It is a very transient phase in your existence, but it is in this phase and only in this phase that certain things can be experienced and the benefits derived from them. If you look at the overall scheme of things, the big picture, including eternity, there is a long life after the one you are now in, and many accounts will be balanced later. The good will be rewarded. The unjust will be punished. All will be made right; all will be settled. It is a matter of trust. I ask you to trust Me that I know what I am doing and that the end result is worth it.

Interviewer: I can tell that this is an emotional issue with You as well.

God: A very emotional issue. I do have emotions and I am not beyond being hurt. Part of love is being vulnerable, and because I am love I am vulnerable to hurt. But the fact that I can be hurt does not mean I can be conquered. I remain invincible, and in the end, all that I have planned will come to pass. True justice and love will triumph; you will see.

Interviewer: So why? Why the hurt and suffering?

God: I just tried to explain but I see that you didn't understand. Pain and suffering are indeed "bad" things and they will eventually be done away with. But at the same time there are certain aspects of the character of mankind that can only be shaped by seemingly negative things like this. Those who have known these things are "greater" than those that have not-not because they are necessarily better people but because they know what it is like to be on the receiving end of these things. I know I am making a sweeping statement here that might not seem to hold true in all cases, but nevertheless it does hold true. However, there are always many other factors involved that can affect what could be considered the desired outcome.

Interviewer: So You are saying that at the end of the day we have to trust You, even if it doesn't seem that what is happening is right and good?

God: Yes, it comes down to that. Even when it is very hard to understand, please trust Me.

Remember that life is not always so hard to bear. Sometimes things go well for you, don't they?

Interviewer: Yes. But those are not the times that we feel we need Your help or an explanation.

God: So I get blamed for the bad, but not thanked for the good?

Interviewer: Unfortunately that seems to be the case, and I concede that is very unfair. I admire Your patience with us all.

God: Contrary to popular opinion, being God isn't easy! Shall we get back to angels?

Interviewer: Yes, that would be nice. Are there different levels of authority? A command structure, so to speak?

God: Yes, there are angels and over them are archangels. Then there are other angels who have specialized tasks, that have charge over My throne or over certain places.

Interviewer: Do these look different than the others?

God: Yes, but these are spiritual entities, so to describe them by describing physical characteristics is a bit futile. They can assume physical characteristics, but that is not their normal form.

Interviewer: We picture them as having wings and halos, but otherwise bodies similar to ours.

God: They do appear as having those things and they have been described accurately, for that is one form they manifest themselves in, to mankind. But they are not limited to those manifestations.

Interviewer: So why the wings? Do they signify anything?

God: Angels do not always appear with wings. When they do, some have two, some four, and some even six. The wings are manifestations of their powers, the abilities that they have to do things that man cannot. Man has always wanted to fly, and so to see these wonderful creatures that are not bound to the earth has inspired awe and wonder. I even inspired and instructed craftsmen and artists in the past to represent My angels as having wings.

Interviewer: Was that for a more primitive time?

God: "Primitive" is a misnomer. Less advanced in some fields of science and technology maybe, but I would say the horrors that man perpetrates today are more primitive and extreme in their barbarity than much that occurred during man's earlier tenure on earth. But that is another subject.

Interviewer: Do angels have names?

God: Yes. Some of them you know from biblical and other accounts, such as Gabriel and Michael.

Interviewer: Are there other names we could be told?

God: Yes, but I would like to keep that for a little later if I may.

Interviewer: Of course, if You wish. I hope You don't mind but there is one... Well, to be honest I feel a bit silly asking this question, but it is one of those questions that has come up about angels. How many angels can dance on the head of a pin?

God: You are right, silly question. But since you asked, the answer is none.

Interviewer: None?

God: Yes. None of them are silly enough to try dancing on pinheads.

Interviewer: Oh. I should have expected that. So tell me now about spirits. How does a departed human end up with the job of being a spirit?

God: All departed humans are spirits. The grave is not the end of a person's life. Each person's spirit continues to live after the body dies; it's just that different ones live in different places. How they end up with various jobs in their spirit stage depends on a lot of things. First, it all depends on where you decide you want to end up-Heaven or Hell. In Hell there are not many openings for jobs-at least not if you want to work for Me.

Interviewer: I don't think many of us would want a job there.

God: Yes, I assure you most people would rather not. As far as those in Heaven, their desires in the matter are a big determining factor.

Interviewer: I suppose some would look at Heaven as the ultimate vacation destination and wouldn't be too interested in getting a "job," but would rather just relax and kick up their heels.

God: (Chuckles.) Yes, most true! Some of them really don't want to get down to any work for quite a while, and I can hardly blame them for that. But all play can be unfulfilling after a while, and then they want to get into doing something. Work is a lot more pleasurable in the heavenly realm and for most it is infinitely more rewarding than the drudgery many put up with on earth. Whatever they work at has eternal meaning and benefits. It is not as on earth, where much that you do one day has to be repeated the next to little avail.

Interviewer: So what kind of job openings would one find in the heavenly classifieds?

God: What kind of job would you like?

Interviewer: Something in an advisory capacity perhaps.

God: Perhaps we could find something for you in the "bad jokes" department. (Chuckles.) But seriously, there are innumerable opportunities. If you want to go into something advisory, how about working as a spirit helper to someone still on earth? That is a function of many spirits.

Interviewer: But I thought that each person had a guardian angel. Why would they need help from spirits too?

God: The spirits have more of a specialist instructor role. They are usually sent for some specific purpose, and that purpose can be long or shortterm. The guardian angel, though, is a permanent assignment.

Interviewer: Can You elaborate on what the "specialist instructor" does?

God: Well, say there is a specific task that someone has. Writing a book might be one. The assigned spirit would normally bring some expertise to the subject-perhaps an intimate knowledge of the subject of the book, or perhaps a talent for writing.

Interviewer: Would anybody who sat down to write a book get one of these helpers?

God: No, not necessarily. There would have to be a compelling reason for sending a spirit to help, and usually it would in some way be to serve My overall purpose for mankind.

Interviewer: Which is?

God: My goodness, didn't we cover that? Why, to get as many people as possible to eventually come live in Heaven.

Interviewer: So in the case of the writer, these helping spirits would be trying in some way to get the writer to say something in his book like, "Want to go to Heaven?"

God: Not exactly, but they would at least be trying to help the writer say something that might get his readers thinking in some way about the reality of the spirit world, or of Me. Or even trying to

get them at least to want to do some good in the world, help their fellow man, be a bit more-or a lot more-altruistic or kind or just or show more consideration to others. Things along these lines. These are all manifestations of love, which are manifestations of Me.

Interviewer: But knowing how difficult it seems for us here to stay attuned to the spiritual, it must be a very frustrating assignment to be a spiritual companion to someone on earth.

God: It can be, but when the person is in tune and everything goes as it should, it is one of the most rewarding experiences there can be. Oftentimes the spirits ask to be assigned to someone they have an affinity with-a descendant or relative, a friend, someone who has similar interests, even one's spouse or children. Aside from deriving pleasure out of just plain helping someone they like and love, they in a sense also get to live their lives over and help that person succeed at something they didn't or accomplish something that they had always wanted to.

Sometimes they can get a little too eager and some of their thoughts and memories of their lives on earth are transferred to their charge. It can seem to the one on the receiving end that he or she is getting a flashback of a former life.

Interviewer: Does this explain the theory of reincarnation then?

God: Yes, it does. Those people getting thoughts of another life are actually experiencing the memories of a previous lifetime as though they themselves have lived before. In reality, they are usually the memories of the spirit helping them.

Interviewer: Are the spirit guides out of line in projecting their thoughts like this?

God: Once in awhile, yes, but mostly it happens accidentally. The trouble is, once those thoughts are in the mind of the one on earth, they are there permanently. Although not in conscious mind all the time, these memories can be activated by things like hypnotism or some sort of trauma, or even by something positive emotionally. This can lead to some rather complicated situations.

Interviewer: And some rather mixed-up people through no fault of their own.

God: Well, you can't draw such sweeping conclusions. Although there is some fault on the spirit's side, a lot of people make the wrong assumption. A little more caution and level-headedness might cause them to consider the evidence more thoughtfully and not jump to conclusions.

Interviewer: Any last word about angels and spirits?

God: Are we drawing to a close already? Time flies. We who live in eternity are not constrained by time, but that is another subject too. Hopefully that will whet your appetite for more.

To close on angels and spirits, I would like to say that all the forces of Heaven are fighting for the right. Although it may at times look as though the other side is winning, My angels are much stronger and more numerous than the fallen ones, and My plan will not fail to come to pass. Good will triumph and the victory of My heavenly forces is assured. So you may in full confidence put your money on My side as being the one to win eventually. In fact, you can bet your life on it.

Interviewer: I am sure the readers will appreciate that hot tip. Thank You for coming again. Can we look forward to more of these tête-à-têtes?

God: Most assuredly.

Secrets and Fun

Interview Three

Interviewer: Here we are again. And for openers may I ask what might sound like an unusual question?

God: All depends on what it is. But since I already know what you are going to ask, yes, it is okay.

Interviewer: So there is no keeping secrets from You?

God: No, I'm afraid not. Actually I am not afraid. It's just a figure of speech, you understand.

Interviewer: Of course.

God: So do you want to ask your question?

Interviewer: But You already know it.

God: I do, but don't you want to ask it anyway?

Interviewer: But if You know it, why should I ask it?

God: Because that is your part.

Interviewer: Do You really need my part?

God: Of course I do. If I didn't need you and your part, you wouldn't have been created in the first place.

Interviewer: You made us because You need us?

God: Doesn't that stand to reason?

Interviewer: But You are God; why would You need anyone or anything?

God: Because I am love, and love needs people to love.

Interviewer: So You created us to love us?

God: Yes. Is that so strange?

Interviewer: I am trying to grasp the idea.

God: It is mirrored in people wanting babies. Do they want them because they want to change their diapers, stay up late with them when they won't sleep, nurse them when they are sick, and do everything for them when they are young? Then as they grow older, work to provide them with a secure and happy life with the things they need? I think not. They want them because they want to have them be part of their lives. So, similar to how most parents want to have their kids, I wanted to have human companionship.

Interviewer: You made us to be Your companions?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: I sort of thought that You needed us to worship You.

God: Don't you worship the ones you love?

Interviewer: Yes, I suppose so, but that is somewhat different from worshipping God. I mean, they even call church services worship services. It's a way of showing respect to You.

God: Bless those souls who go to those things, but I do crave something a bit more on the intimate side. Well, to be honest, a lot more on the intimate side.

Interviewer: So You'd rather we here be more like friends with You?

God: Yes, even lovers.

Interviewer: Whoa, that is getting intimate.

God: Don't lovers love?

Interviewer: Yes, but lovers love ... well, you know ... a little more than just friendship.

God: Is this going down sideways?

Interviewer: No! It is just ... well, we could say interesting.

God: I'm glad you are interested. You see, I desire to love you and be loved by you in the deepest form imaginable. For some this is to think of Me as a lover, and speak to Me in passionate terms.

But most people are more comfortable loving Me as a kingly, divine Father, and I appreciate that too, very much. I crave to be close to people in whatever way possible.

Interviewer: You said You made us to be Your companions. But it doesn't seem that many people are really being that companionable with You.

God: That is unfortunately true.

Interviewer: Does that disappoint You?

God: It does, but there is hope.

Interviewer: Hope?

God: Yes, because most eventually will get the point, if not in this world, then in the world to come.

Interviewer: I think some of us have the concept in our mind that we would take our place in Heaven as sort of part of the workforce where You are the boss, or perhaps better said, the king. But You are hinting that things might be a bit less hierarchical.

God: I will be the king, but yes, it is not going to be Me just coming out on the balcony of My palace and waving to the crowds once a year or something. No, I will be down amongst the people often. I enjoy your company. You never did ask your question.

Interviewer: I was going to ask what You did for fun, providing of course You are into fun.

God: Why wouldn't I be into fun? If you are created in My image, then a lot of your desires mirror Mine. If you desire fun, it is a pretty safe bet that I desire fun also.

Interviewer: So what do You do for fun?

God: Oh, I had a six-day party awhile back and made the universe. That was pretty fun.

Interviewer: Anything a little less spectacular?

God: I am a creator, so I love to create. I love to make things.

Interviewer: Like what-besides the universe, that is?

God: How about Heaven? We took a little more time with that.

Interviewer: We?

God: Yes, I and all the others who are helping.

Interviewer: What about a hobby?

God: I love people-watching.

Interviewer: Sports?

God: No one wants to play Me because I always win, and even if I did lose, they would know I did it on purpose. For that reason I generally stay away from sports, though I go watch others play.

Interviewer: So they play sports in Heaven?

God: Definitely, though the killer instinct is absent, so every game is a friendly one.

Interviewer: But isn't competition the basis of sport?

God: Most of the time on earth, yes. But up here values are different, so they don't try to beat the other guy too much. There is an element of competition sometimes, but just to enjoy doing something vigorous with a friend.

Interviewer: Wouldn't everyone there be pretty much equal in abilities anyway?

God: No. Some are better at some things than others. Everyone has lots of ability, but not necessarily equal ability in everything. Variety is the spice of life, even in the afterlife.

Interviewer: Interesting! You said something before about church services, and it didn't sound like You were that thrilled with them.

God: They are often pretty dull and boring. Would you be that thrilled with them?

Interviewer: No. I stopped going.

God: I know.

Interviewer: Yes, I suppose You do. This gets to me a bit, that You know everything. Is there any privacy in the spirit world? Seems it is sometimes nice to have a few things about oneself that aren't known.

God: Like what? Your PIN?

Interviewer: I suppose I won't be needing that, will I?

God: I haven't thought of a use for that here.

Interviewer: I think I would like to have my thoughts be private.

God: Why? Do you want to think bad thoughts?

Interviewer: No!

God: Honestly?

Interviewer: Well ... all right, I can get to brooding over something and then I suppose my thoughts are not "good." But it is more than that. I think it would be nice to have the freedom to bounce things around inside for a while before anyone knows what I am thinking.

God: So you have a little trouble being transparent?

Interviewer: It just sounds a little Orwellian to have my mind and thoughts monitored.

God: Please let me assure you it is not like Big Brother. It is that we are honest and open here, so we don't feel a need to hide our thoughts and intentions.

Interviewer: You say "we." Are You included in all this openness?

God: I am very open, but My mind is beyond yours even in your heavenly state. So no, you won't be able to read My thoughts. But that does not prevent My being open and forthright with you.

Interviewer: It will take a little getting used to.

God: But it is that way now.

Interviewer: I suppose so, but somehow it is just not so obvious. Well, on to another subject. Do You have favorites?

God: In what way?

Interviewer: Ones that are like Your pets who You are more indulgent with, that You care for more and watch out for more carefully.

God: I love everybody with equal fervor. But those who love Me back do benefit more than those who don't. These are those who try to follow Me closely and spread My love and message to others.

Interviewer: Is this fair? Shouldn't You just treat everybody the same?

God: Isn't it fair to reward good rather than not to? If there is someone who is good to you, don't you hold him or her in higher esteem than others? It is the same with Me. I reward those who try their best to love Me and others.

Interviewer: From my perspective, I can't help but think there are some people who do not deserve Your favor but who seem to get it big time. Aren't there a lot of well-off people who have lots of comfort and care who are far from deserving of it?

God: You are equating luxury and plenty with My blessings. This is not necessarily the case. In fact, it is rarely the case. I do care for those who love Me and I can bless them materially, but an abundance of material goods is, on its own, no indication of My blessings. The majority of the blessings I bestow are those of the spirit. Peace of mind and heart are much more valuable than material things. And it is far better to save up your rewards in the world to come than to get them there on earth.

Interviewer: Some people seem to be just plain lucky. They get all the breaks, whereas others of us never win a raffle or hardly even a hand of poker. What is it with these people who always seem to win at bingo or cards or other things? Are some people just born lucky?

God: Are you talking about gambling?

Interviewer: Well, gambling is part of it.

God: There are precious few who win at gambling. The only people who really make the money are the ones organ_izing the gambling, and they play everyone else for suckers. They are parasites playing on the gullibility of everyone else. Gambling has ruined many lives.

Interviewer: There go the church bingo games.

God: Bingo! Let's qualify this and say that a little playing of games of chance in moderation is okay, but it can often grow into an inordinate addiction. If it's kept small, it is one thing, but it often doesn't stay that way. I have it in print right in the Bible where I say the love of money is the root of all evil. Those who gamble love to win. I mean, no one gambles because they love to lose, right? And the prize is usually money. And the pursuit of that will lead them down the path of evil, and by that I mean disaster.

Interviewer: A recurring theme seems to be that enjoying most things in moderation is okay.

God: That is a pretty good rule of thumb.

Interviewer: So are You okay about drinking alcohol?

God: In moderation. (Laughs.) You know that was Jesus' first recorded miracle.¹

Interviewer: Changing the water into wine.

God: Yes. Very good wine, too, as you've read.

Interviewer: Yes. I have heard some people rail at the "demon drink," but You don't seem to think it is so demonic.

God: If you abuse it, then it becomes demon drink. Then it no longer "makes glad the heart of man," as the Bible says, but it has gone beyond that into turning him imbecilic or morose or even violent. Instead of the drink helping to relax you, it has turned into a monster that dominates and ruins your life.

Interviewer: So why give us such a thing if You knew it was going to be abused?

God: Learning how to use things correctly is all part of the reason for you being there in the first place. It is true that I knew that alcohol in its many varieties would be abused, but many people use it wisely. There are times when it helps to have a drink to relax, and it helps people be sociable. Why, they have even uncovered the fact that it is healthy to drink a little. But for goodness sake, don't abuse it.

Interviewer: You have been very kind to answer all these questions. Perhaps we'll wrap this up here. This interview is a little short, but I think this is a good point to end on.

God: Agreed. So until next time?

Interviewer: Yes!

Surprises and Jesus

Interview Four

Interviewer: Hello.

God: Hello. Glad to see you are well today.

Interviewer: Yes, I am, thank You very much! I suppose it is redundant to ask how You are.

God: As far as health is concerned, yes. But I do have a range of emotions, and so sometimes I feel "better" than others.

Interviewer: Sometimes better than others? You never cease to amaze me. I find You so incredibly interesting, and a lot of preconceived ideas I have had about You keep going out the window.

God: How's that?

Interviewer: I suppose the concept of You having better days than others is one of them.

God: It is logical, isn't it?

Interviewer: When I think about it, yes! I must have never thought about it before.

God: Isn't that the point of these interviews? Didn't you want to have your questions answered and find out more about Me?

Interviewer: Originally it was to have my questions answered, but it has gone further than that now. I have discovered that You are much more approachable and interesting than I had thought. I don't mean to sound disrespectful when I say interesting.-It is just that things come up that I wasn't expecting. I guess I thought You were beyond my comprehension, so I figured You could give me answers on other subjects. But I thought I would find You still too incomprehensible to even begin to understand.

God: I am glad you find Me interesting. And I am incomprehensible in total, but you can look forward to understanding more about Me all the time.

Interviewer: Learning about You will never end?

God: No, it won't.

Interviewer: Well, You have explained a lot about Yourself. May I ask You some questions now about Jesus?

God: Most certainly-one of My favorite topics! But this is a switch. Most people ask Jesus about Me.

Interviewer: I suppose they do. We are told Jesus is Your Son. How can God have a son?

God: Why couldn't I have a Son? If men and women can have sons and daughters, why should it be so odd that God could have a Son?

Interviewer: Why stop at one then?

God: In a way I didn't stop there, because I created humanity to also have the choice to become My sons and daughters.

Interviewer: But we are scarcely in the same league.

God: Of course, but you are all loved to the same degree I love Jesus.

Interviewer: To the same degree? That sounds extraordinary! It would seem to me, and I will be the first to admit my limitations in trying to understand this, that Jesus, being God with you, would somehow be the object of a much greater degree of love.

God: I loved humanity so much that I was willing to have Jesus come down to earth, to be separate from Me to be with you, and eventually to die for you. Does that not prove that I love you all just as much as I love Him?

Interviewer: I cannot argue with that. Still, it seems that You must have a special love for each other.

God: Our love is extraordinarily special, more than you can even grasp.

Interviewer: Okay, I am confused. Your love for each other is so extraordinarily special that I cannot even grasp it, yet You love us the same as You love Jesus. Isn't there a contradiction here?

God: No, but your finite mind is simply receiving information that it cannot really absorb. The key to Jesus and My love is that We are love at our essence. Our love for each other is perfect and perfectly reciprocated. But you can understand that each love that you have in your life is special in some way. The love you have for your child differs from the love you have for your wife, but nevertheless they are both special and they are both love.

Similarly, a good father doesn't love any one of his children more than the other, right? Due to circumstances, he may invest more time in one than another or he may be closer to one than another, but he does really love them all the same. I had a job to do with My Son, Jesus, and that was to save all of you-My other children! But that doesn't mean I love Him more than you.

Interviewer: Okay, I think I begin to get the picture. So to continue, why did You choose Mary and Joseph to be Jesus' parents on earth?

God: Mary was a special girl in many ways, but in her role as Jesus' earthly mother, she is not just an individual.-She is a representative of humanity. She was a wonderful mother to Him, but she was not so extraordinary. She was a typical woman, as Joseph was a typical man. Part of Jesus' mission was to be born and raised in a family very representative of the vast majority of other families. He was going to experience life as it was typically experienced, so that He would have firsthand knowledge of what it was like to be an average human being.

Interviewer: I think You have just preempted my next question: Why was Jesus not born to people of more standing in the world? His birth was in even more humble circumstances than His family was accustomed to.

God: Yes, that is so. That was all part of the plan. It really has been a test for humanity to see if they could believe that a man born in a stable in an obscure country-then under foreign rule-trained as a carpenter, later becoming an itinerant holy man and then executed as a criminal, would actually be God. It is a testament to the spiritual power behind this truth that people have believed that Jesus was God, not to mention that contemporary believers are numbered in the billions.

Interviewer: He certainly didn't receive any encouragement from either the civil or religious authorities of His day.

God: He certainly did not. His fiercest critics should have been his greatest supporters.

Interviewer: You are referring to the religious Jews of the time?

God: There were some of His race that believed, but not that many. Most of them regarded Him as anathema, and it was they who brought the charges against Him. Then it was the Roman rulers, even convinced of His innocence, who nevertheless had Him executed in the most cruel fashion that they could. A lot of people have had a lot to answer for.

Interviewer: I imagine that they have. But even though some Jews opposed Him, nevertheless all His original followers were Jews.

God: Of course, and many of them were dynamos.

Interviewer: Tell me-the disciples Jesus chose-they weren't really the most trained and educated people, were they?

God: That is the understatement of the year. You described them very delicately. Afraid that you might have to answer to some of them when you get up here?

Interviewer: Honestly, no! It is just that I am often dumbfounded at the accomplishments of the men and women who took up the torch once Jesus had gone, how they spread His teachings throughout the known world.

God: Once again it is a testament to the message even more so than to the messengers. But they were really a great bunch, once they got the fire in their bellies. It was their boldness and conviction that won people. Paul was the most zealous, and he wasn't even around Jesus personally when He was on earth.

Interviewer: He was also the most educated and trained for the task, too.

God: In some ways, yes, but his education didn't mean that much as far as what he did. His knowledge stood in the way of his belief for a long time, and it wasn't till he saw the light that he was willing to accept that he was wrong. Later he was able to use his knowledge in his writing, but I would be the first to admit that you've got to be pretty bright to understand some of what he wrote.

Interviewer: By "saw the light" You are being quite literal here and referring to how he was blinded for a while by that brilliant light?2

God: Yes. Before that, he was fanatically for the opposition, so much so that he refused to acknowledge the truth even when it was quite obvious.

Interviewer: Getting back to Jesus Himself, what was it like for You when He was on earth?

God: I had very mixed emotions. I was very happy that His mission that We had planned for so long was now in progress. On the other hand, I was sad because even though We had contact, it was not the same as it was between us when He was wholly in the spiritual realm with Me.

Interviewer: So it wasn't as though You were in contact all the time?

God: We were in contact all the time, but it was similar, though much more constant, as it can be between Me and people on earth who love Me today. There is contact, but it is not always tangible and apparent. We wanted to have stronger contact, but because of the limitations I had originally put in place between the physical and spiritual realms at Creation, We couldn't. During

this time I grew to love humanity even more, as I learned to understand more how it felt to so want to reach out.

Interviewer: This is a revelation! You "learned"?

God: Is that so surprising?

Interviewer: Definitely, yes! You are in our eyes omniscient. If You know all things, how can You learn?

God: I had never been in the position of being separated from Jesus like this. It was a new thing, so I learned something from it.

Interviewer: I am still reeling over this. Wouldn't You know what it was like anyway, because You are all-knowing?

God: Even being all-knowing doesn't mean I had experienced everything. I loved and sympathized with humanity, but one can never empathize unless one has experienced something. I experienced many of the emotions that humanity goes through during the time Jesus was on earth. I felt the greatest tenderness when I saw Him there as a tiny babe at His birth. I felt the greatest pride in seeing Him reject all the temptations placed before Him to do something with His life other than what We had planned, and rather choose to go ahead with His mission. I felt the greatest sorrow and anguish when I watched as Jesus suffered and died on the cross. I had to hold Myself back and not interfere, or else all We had gone through would have been in vain. I then felt the greatest joy and happiness when I was reunited with Him after that ordeal was over.

Interviewer: Although that is logical and extremely touching, somehow it just seems to make You less omnipotent for some reason, less divine and more...

God: Human?

Interviewer: Yes, I suppose "human" is the word for it.

God: You don't want Me to be "human"?

Interviewer: In some ways, no. If You can learn in this way, it gives the impression that You are not perfect and therefore could make mistakes or something.

God: You are afraid I will make a mistake?

Interviewer: Well, perhaps I am, I don't know. I mean, we have enough of us down here making mistakes and so we can't afford to have You making mistakes, too.

God: Yes, I see what you mean. Well, don't worry, I am not making any mistakes. But don't you want to learn more, to experience new things? Would you want to deny Me the same?

Interviewer: No! But it just seems to open a ... a whole new aspect of things, so I am not so sure about it.

God: You were going to say "can of worms."

Interviewer: True, but I thought better of it. It was not appropriate.

God: Glad you got that right.

Interviewer: Me too! When reading the Bible, one has the impression that You had somewhat of a change from the way You were in the Old Testament to the way You were in the New Testament. When You said You "learned," and You spoke of the difference between sympathy and empathy, does that explain this apparent change?

God: I didn't change per se, but it did cause Me to modify My behavior towards humanity. Both Jesus and I knew that this experience would have this effect, so it wasn't that We were not prepared for it in every way. But due to His coming to earth to die for mankind, We did change certain basics. The keeping of the laws of the Old Testament was replaced with the grace and love of the New Testament.

Interviewer: This is a big subject that perhaps we could cover another time. To finish off our time now, may I get rather personal?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: When Jesus died on the cross He is said to have called out to You, asking why You had forsaken Him. Was that difficult for You?

God: There are no words to describe the pain that both He and I suffered at that time. Many of you know what it is like to have a loved one suffer and die. You have then had a glimpse of the sorrow that We suffered. But what sustained Us was the knowledge that what We were doing was going to result in a wonderful victory for Us and for mankind. We don't dwell on the pain but rather on the triumph over death and pain that happened as a result.

Interviewer: So You weren't just able to shut Yourself off from what was happening?

God: No, of course not. My Son was dying in agony in a cruel and ghastly and unjust execution. No good father could turn his back on that. But I could not intervene. I had to let it happen for the sake of mankind.

Interviewer: The reunion must have been marvelous.

God: Between Jesus and Myself? Yes, it was the most marvelous moment ever.

Interviewer: But You had to wait the 40 days, till He ascended to Heaven.⁴

God: Are you kidding? Not at all. We were together in spirit as soon as we could be after the ordeal. All this is very mysterious to most people. They have tried to put their various spins on this event, but let Me assure you that We were not separated for an instant longer than was necessary.

Interviewer: You have great love for each other, don't You?

God: Greater than you can ever imagine.

Interviewer: But You have no regrets at what You both went through.

God: It was extremely difficult for both of Us, but neither of Us regrets doing it, because We knew of the eventual help and happiness it would bring to all of you.

Interviewer: I see. I will end this here then, and next time I would like to ask more about all this, if I may.

God: I will look forward to that then.

Heaven and Hell

Interview Five

Interviewer: Thank You once again for coming.

God: I am happy to be here again.

Interviewer: To be talking to You in this way is still very awesome for me. You are so far out there and beyond understanding.

God: I have revealed a lot about Myself to humanity in My Word.

Interviewer: You are referring to the Bible?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: But many find it rather difficult to read.

God: They say that because they haven't really tried. There is a lot in there that is very straightforward and understandable. Then there is much that is a bit more on the mysterious side. Believing the mysterious without fully understanding it is a matter of faith.

Interviewer: But why make it mysterious in the first place?

God: That serves a number of purposes. First, it allowed Me to place in My Word secrets that could later-sometimes millennia later-become understood. Their later fulfillment or disclosure proves divine authorship of the words in the first place. Second, when something becomes understood by a person, it inspires in them a greater interest in reading My Word more, to want to search for other secrets. Third, it is a test of faith. I like it when people believe what I say just because I said it and not because they necessarily understand it. To Me it shows that they love and trust Me even though they might not understand.

Interviewer: So is the Bible the sum total of Your Word?

God: Well, I think the answer to that would be obvious. If the words in the Bible were all I ever wanted to say, I wouldn't be giving these interviews. These dialogues contain My Words, do they not?

Interviewer: Well, that is rather flattering, but I really wouldn't put this interview on the same level as the Bible.

God: That's modest of you! (God chuckles.) But you see, I have spoken and do indeed speak to men and women, boys and girls of all nations and religions. I am a living and moving God. I didn't hang up My pen-or My megaphone, for that matter-when the Bible was completed. I still talk to people today, trying to show them what I would like them to do with and in their lives. True, these things are not on the level of the Bible, but they are still My Words.

Interviewer: You stated before that the idea of this life is to prepare us for the next life.

God: It is a preparation for the next life, but that is not the whole purpose for this life. You are also supposed to be a force for good in the present world. But the next world is the one that you will be in for eternity.

Interviewer: So if I am good, I get to go to the good place?

God: You mean Heaven?

Interviewer: Yes.

God: Ah, Heaven! The paradise of the afterlife! A place of infinite beauty that is forever getting better. But there is a prerequisite to get in the door. You first have to receive My Son, Jesus, into your heart.

Interviewer: This is an absolute prerequisite? I mean, I am talking to You here and so it seems I could bypass Jesus.

God: There is only one way to get into Heaven and be reconciled to Me, and that is through Jesus.

Interviewer: What do You mean by "reconciled"?

God: It is a long story, but the short version is that the original inhabitants of the earth did something that I asked them not to.

Interviewer: I assume You are referring to Adam and Eve.

God: Yes, dear Adam and Eve. By doing what they did, they introduced sin into the world. This sin is what separates mankind from Me. Jesus died so that that sin might be forgiven. Oh, I know to some that might sound a bit macabre, but there are certain rules in place in the spirit world that are inviolable. Rather than trying to understand it all right now, just believe that it had to be this way.

Because Jesus died and rose again, all that has to happen to be forgiven of all sin in your life is to believe in Him and ask Him to forgive you. When He forgives you, I forgive you. And then we are reconciled. Simple as that!

Interviewer: You said "all sin."

God: Yes, all sin!

Interviewer: So that covers all past sin?

God: Not only all past sin, but also all present and future sins.

Interviewer: Isn't that carte blanche to do whatever you want, even if it is sin?

God: No. Your sins are forgiven by Me, but that doesn't mean you won't suffer in some way for willful sin. People have to live with the consequences of their actions. Even if there is forgiveness, it does not mean there are not consequences; and even if I forgive you, others may not. If you commit crimes, you will certainly pay for them sooner or later in some way. If you hurt others, whether they forgive you or not is up to them. And if you knowingly do something wrong, it may result in permanent damage to you in some way.

Interviewer: But the sinner is still reconciled with You; I mean, if he believes in Jesus and has asked for forgiveness?

God: Yes. There is no way that can be withdrawn. It is also an inviolable law that once you are saved, you are forever saved.

Interviewer: You are introducing another word here, "saved."

God: It is another term for what we were talking about. It is the same as "reconciled." The Bible refers to it as salvation, which means being saved. You are saved from a life without Me and saved from Hell in the afterlife.

Interviewer: So Hell is a real place? It is not just a metaphor?

God: Hell is very real. It is the antithesis of Heaven. In every way that Heaven is beautiful, Hell is devoid of beauty. Imagine your worst nightmare and you have a taste of Hell.

Interviewer: But why Hell? If You are love, then how can You allow such a place to exist?

God: It serves a purpose similar to that which punishment and jail serve on earth. More than anything, it is a deterrent. No one really wants to be punished or go to jail, so the majority behave. You don't have to go there unless you choose to by your actions. I am trying to get everyone into Heaven, and frankly, human nature being what it is, some people have to be scared into it by this unpleasant alternative.

Interviewer: But that doesn't seem the best motive for being reconciled to You.

God: It works with some.

Interviewer: It still comes down to a choice, though.

God: Man has free choice. Everyone must choose for himself. Man wasn't created as an automaton. Of course, I want people to choose My way and I give them every encouragement to.

Interviewer: But what about all those who haven't heard how to be reconciled to You? It seems very unfair to send them to Hell simply because they haven't had the chance to hear how to go to Heaven.

God: Who said I send them there if they haven't had a chance to hear?

Interviewer: Well, that is logical, because there are billions of people in the world and not all of them—in fact, I would say hardly a majority of them—have heard about You, Jesus, or salvation.

God: Why are you limiting it to them hearing about all this in this world?

Interviewer: That seems the reasonable conclusion. Are You implying that these things can be presented to them in the afterlife?

God: Exactly, or as you suggested, it would scarcely be fair, would it? I know there are some who say that the only chance for receiving salvation is in this world, but I am afraid that they do Me a disservice in this.

Interviewer: So that means people could put off the decision till after they die?

God: No. If you have been presented with the information in this life and refuse it, then your decision has already been made.

Interviewer: But surely a lot of good and respectable people may well refuse?

God: Yes. It is their choice, as with everyone.

Interviewer: That would mean that some real nasty criminal type could end up in Heaven and a good, upstanding, law-abiding person could end up in Hell.

God: It could and does happen. Entry to Heaven does not depend on what you have done with your life, but it depends on your acceptance or refusal of Jesus. Everyone is on a level playing field when it comes to this choice.

Interviewer: I can't help but feel that that is somewhat unfair. A good person ends up in Hell and the bad person ends up in Heaven scot-free.

God: I didn't say scot-free. Just because a bad person ends up in Heaven does not mean that he or she will not have to make right what he or she has done wrong. What a person receives in Heaven in the way of rewards is meted out according to what good he or she has done in this life. One could well end up the equivalent of a pauper on his initial arrival and could also be required to make amends for what he had done on earth.

Likewise the "good" person who ends up in Hell, but then receives and believes in Jesus, will not stay there. However, if he stubbornly and adamantly refuses Jesus, he cannot enter Heaven. Receiving Jesus and believing in His sacrifice on humanity's behalf is the only acceptable ticket for entry into Heaven.

Interviewer: While we are on the subject of Hell, may I ask about the Devil?

God: He is not a particularly favorite topic, but if you must.

Interviewer: So who or what is he?

God: He is a fallen angel, formerly one of the top who raised a rebellion amongst the angels against Me. He and those who have followed him have been fighting against all I wish to do ever since.

Interviewer: Surely You could eliminate him if You wished?

God: I could, and it is not that I don't want to be rid of him, but he serves a useful purpose, so I allow him to continue.

Interviewer: What use is he? Seems he is at best a nuisance and at worst a menace.

God: He indeed is the antithesis of all I stand for. He is opposite, but in no way equal. He represents the alternative. Everything I stand for he is against, and everything I am against he promotes.

Interviewer: So he is the competition.

God: That is one way to look at it, but it is really no contest between him and Me. He wages war for the souls of men. He tries by any and all means to catch as many as he can in his web of deceit and hate. I, on the other hand, offer truth and love.

Interviewer: Sounds like he is definitely hard sell compared to You.

God: His methods contrast entirely with Mine. I want people to come to Me by their own choice, while he uses every means he can to try to keep people from doing that.

Interviewer: Why do You let him get away with that?

God: I allow him to in order to test humanity. The Devil's way or My way-which will they choose as individuals and collectively?

Interviewer: You say "collectively." So far You have talked about individuals. Where does the collective aspect come in?

God: I control the universe, but for now I have let the Devil have his way somewhat on earth. Remember the account in the Bible where the Devil showed Jesus all the nations of the world and said he would give them to Jesus-for they were the Devil's to give-if Jesus would bow down and worship him? Well, the Devil was right, in that the driving force behind most nations of the world is him, and not Me. If it were Me, you would be seeing Heaven on earth, but instead you can see there is only increased suffering. The time will come when I will change all that and set up Heaven on earth. But for now, because of man's selfishness, the Devil is having a heyday on earth, and it will get worse before it gets better.

Interviewer: This brings up a lot of other subjects, such as Heaven on earth and things getting worse before they get better, but I would like to finish off the Devil first.

God: Be My guest.

Interviewer: I beg Your pardon?

God: Finish off the Devil.

Interviewer: Oh, I see.

God: Well, you won't be able to, but I will at the right time.

Interviewer: I was meaning finish off the subject of the Devil.

God: I know. I was just using the pun to make a point. I do have a sense of humor, you know. Some people think I am stiff and formal. A stuffed shirt. But they will certainly find out differently when they finally get to see Me.

Interviewer: Yes, I am sure they will.

God: So you want to know more about the Devil?

Interviewer: Yes. I think most people have the impression that he sits on some sort of throne in the middle of Hell, similar, I imagine, to how You must have some sort of throne in Heaven.

God: Well, he fancies himself a king, but he is not reigning in Hell. Even Hell is controlled and organized by Me, and one day soon Satan will find himself the chief inmate.

Interviewer: Satan being another name for the Devil?

God: Right!

Interviewer: This is a very different concept than that which we are used to. The Devil does not reign in Hell?

God: No, definitely not. He and his dwell in the nether regions of the spirit world.

Interviewer: And that is an entirely different place?

God: Yes. He and his minions also wander the earth, doing what they can to cause mischief, mayhem, destruction, and death.

Interviewer: So do You run Hell then, as a sort of spiritual penitentiary?

God: Some think of it that way. That is in reality only one function of a part of it. Hell has many different functions-and institutions-for want of a better word. The word Hell is used, somewhat erroneously, as a catchall for these different locations or spiritual states we've just been talking about. The concept of "Hell" most people are familiar with is that of a realm of fire, sulfurous fumes, hideous creatures, and endless torment. That's just a small part of Hell, reserved for the very worst. The main purpose of Hell is to get the inmates repentant and on the road to rehabilitation. It goes along with My overall purpose of helping all My creation become reconciled with Me so they can have the very best of all I have to give them.

Interviewer: So is this concept of the fire and brimstone correct?

God: In part, but that is certainly not the full picture. However, let it be said that people really don't want to go to Hell when the alternative of Heaven is so much more appealing. Let's leave it at that, as those going there will most assuredly regret it when they realize how easy it was to choose the alternative.

Interviewer: So You would like to close the subject of Hell for now?

God: Heaven is a much more inspiring subject. Could we go on to that?

Interviewer: You are God. You call the shots. Please, let's go on to Heaven. I was getting a bit burned out on Hell too, if You'll pardon the pun.

God: So what would you like to know about Heaven?

Interviewer: Is Heaven departmentalized as it seems Hell is?

God: Heaven is a wonderful place, but when some people first arrive they aren't ready to be ushered into the fullness of it, so there are places to get people up to speed.

Interviewer: Like a cross between a prep school and a halfway house?

God: In a way yes. They are not so much like places to keep these people quarantined but to help them not feel like fish out of water once they go in all the way.

Interviewer: So there are degrees of Heaven?

God: Heaven gets better and better all the time, so in that way there are degrees. Heaven is also vast with an infinite variety of places and functions.

Interviewer: You said earlier it was the "paradise of the afterlife. A place of infinite beauty that is forever getting better." This makes it sound as though it is still a work in progress.

God: Most definitely. There are always improvements being made. It just keeps getting better and better.

Interviewer: Again, this is somewhat of a new concept to me. I think most people regard it as a rather static place. If Heaven is perfect, how can one improve on perfection?

God: "Perfect" hardly does it justice. But we are limited to human vocabulary and concepts in this interview, so this is the best which words can do to describe it. However, I do assure you that it is continually being made better.

Interviewer: I can tell that You are much more enthusiastic in talking about Heaven than You were about Hell.

God: I love to talk about the most marvelous place there ever was and ever can be.

Interviewer: You are the Designer and Creator of it, I assume?

God: Overall, yes. But lots of beings, both angels and spirits, participate in the process with Me. I enjoy watching them design and build parts of it. There really are an infinite variety of styles and tastes that are catered to.

Interviewer: Knowing that what I like differs from what others like-and quite frankly I think some people's tastes are appalling-then it would seem that I might not find parts of Heaven personally appealing.

God: No, I assure you that you will find all of Heaven appealing. It will be at the least pleasant and at the most ... well, there really isn't any "most," as just when you think you have seen the most wonderful thing, you turn the corner and there is something better. It is guaranteed that much of it will knock your proverbial socks off.

Interviewer: That is something to look forward to, providing one wears socks up there, of course.

God: That is why I had to qualify them as proverbial. Heaven is clothing optional.

Interviewer: My goodness! Do You mean to tell me I could be running around naked?

God: If you choose. Of course, you will have a new immortal body, which I think you will be quite pleased with, and there won't be any shame or embarrassment about nudity. But before I leave too many of your readers feeling uncomfortable with this thought, let Me assure them that the operative word is "optional." You can have the most beautiful clothes imaginable if you like. It is just that there is a definite change of mindset when you get to Heaven. The shame that some feel about the nakedness of the human body will be done away with. Remember that this is part of problem that Adam and Eve caused. They were naked in the Garden of Eden until they sinned. Then they were ashamed of their nakedness and tried to cover up. You should have seen how ridiculous they looked trying to cover up with leaves and other things. Well, that is another subject. They know better now.

Interviewer: So they're there then? Adam and Eve, I mean.

God: Yes, of course. Where else would they be?

Interviewer: I thought maybe in the other place.

God: Oh goodness gracious, no! They were some of the first to get in! Everyone makes mistakes. Once they asked for forgiveness, they were forgiven. They are quite the celebrities up here, but they do get a little tired of hearing, "Oh, you were the ones who ..." or "What exactly was the fruit?" etc.

Interviewer: Well, what was the fruit?

God: I'll let you ask them when you get here.

Interviewer: But You just said they get a little tired of being asked that.

God: They do, but it is still their story and I don't like to steal their thunder.

Interviewer: I will look forward to asking them. And I think that may just wrap up our session today. Any final thoughts?

God: You won't want to miss out on Heaven, so don't! Okay?

Interviewer: Looking forward to it immensely. Thanks for coming.

God: You're welcome.

The Quality of Life

Interview Six

Interviewer: It is an incredible privilege to be able to discuss issues with You.

God: I am delighted to have the opportunity.

Interviewer: This time I wondered if we could perhaps bring things down to earth a little more and talk about quality-of-life issues that the average person faces.

God: Sounds interesting.

Interviewer: I am happy You think so, as I was concerned that You wouldn't want to get down to what You might regard as more prosaic things, but rather would like to concentrate on more high-minded issues.

God: No, not at all. I am interested in people and involved with the most minute details of their lives.

Interviewer: Really? The small things in our lives would seem so insignificant and inconsequential in the overall that I had the impression You would find involvement in those very tedious.

God: Goodness, no! Each person is special to Me. As I explained in the last session, I went to great lengths to ensure the well-being of each of you.

Interviewer: May I begin?

God: Please do.

Interviewer: What about the age-old question, "How can I be happy?" I think everyone wants to be happy, but often we are not. Shouldn't happiness be the norm more often than the exception?

God: For some it is the norm, but-you are right-for most it isn't. Basically it is because people have not found the missing ingredient, which is the purpose for life. That purpose is actually twofold: to love Me and to love their fellow man. If they don't fulfill both of these, then the purpose of life is not discovered, fulfillment is not obtained, and the resulting emptiness and dissatisfaction leads to not being happy.

Interviewer: I think some will claim to be happy while neither loving You nor others.

God: The definition or expectations of happiness vary. Some might be content and even at times enjoy a good deal of transitory happiness, but I am talking about enduring happiness of mind and soul, which only comes from what I explained. I created man to want and need to love Me and love others to be truly fulfilled. It is part of the basic design. Although other things can satisfy in part, they cannot completely satisfy. Even to love one and not the other is not enough. Man is created to be truly happy only when he is fulfilling both these purposes.

Interviewer: In other words, being solely involved in the religious realm to the neglect of helping others is not enough either?

God: If I may, please let Me clarify one point. You have made the correlation between love of Me and being religious. Although there are many in religious life who love Me, this does not make loving Me a religious undertaking. There are many who love Me who never darken the doorway of a place of religion.

Interviewer: Are You distancing Yourself from organized religion?

God: I love everyone. I do not appreciate that some feel they have a corner on the market-Me being the product. I am not confined to buildings, ceremonies, or rituals. In fact, the truth be known, I do not inhabit those buildings, and the ceremonies do not express My essence. I am the Spirit of Love that pervades everything.

Interviewer: So You are in the flower, the tree, the sky, etc.

God: In a way, yes, but I can see where you are leading here, as that gets into the ludicrous notion that everything is God. "He's God, you're God, the dog in the yard is God, as well as the

tree it pees against." No, that is not the case. *I'm God.* (God laughs.) I created all those things, so there is in them a touch of the divine, but they are not divine in themselves.

Interviewer: The tree was an interesting addition. I hadn't taken that line of thought that far before. But getting back to the previous question, You are not exclusive to a particular group?

God: No, certainly not. Suffice it to say that those who love Me and love their fellow man and let that love move them into compassionate action are fulfilling their purpose on earth.

Interviewer: So we have to do something?

God: Yes. Love is not actually love unless it moves you to do something beneficial for others.

Interviewer: And love gives rise to happiness?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: What about something like a good joke? It can get one smiling and laughing and the result is that you feel happy. Is this happiness coming through love?

God: That is an example of transitory happiness. When the joke is forgotten, the happiness is gone. Now I like a good joke, so there is nothing wrong with jokes. I like it when people laugh and enjoy themselves. But what I was referring to before is a state of happiness in the heart of man. A true and never-ending state of mind and heart. Something that is permanent.

Interviewer: Here's the difficulty I am having with this concept: Isn't it true that even some of those who have gone down in the annals of history as truly loving You and others have at times gone through huge periods of struggle, even doubt and depression? It would seem that they didn't have that happiness that You talk about. Sometimes good people seem to have even more troubles than those who don't believe.

God: Sometimes those who love Me can go through difficult times, but that does not mean they are no longer happy, that they no longer have that certain peaceful joy inside that only I can give them. In other cases, they can be temporarily robbed of its benefits.-That is true.

Interviewer: Robbed of it? But You were saying it was permanent.

God: It is permanent. Notice I said "benefits." The deep joy I give will always be there. A peace, an assurance that I will take care of him is part of the blessing I give everyone who believes in Me. But sometimes this confidence can be shaken and the ability to access the happiness I give is impaired. It is being interfered with, or hindered.

Let Me explain: As we covered in an earlier interview, there is an opposition. The Devil's plan is to try to get people to disregard My blessings and get their eyes on their problems. They can forget that I am able and willing to bring solutions. When they get in that state, their power to rise above their problems is sorely diminished. They lose the magic power of faith.

Interviewer: So we are back to the cosmic battle.

God: Well, if you want to use the term "cosmic," that is all right, but it is more precisely a battle fought largely in the spiritual realm. The Devil is using doubt to hinder and harass. Doubts are terrible things that can completely engulf people and leave them powerless. But doubts can be overcome.

Interviewer: We have touched on something that is fairly widespread-depression. Many people go through bouts of it, and some never seem to be able to shake it. Are You saying that the Devil causes depression? I don't mean to be difficult here, but that almost sounds medieval.

God: Yes, modern mental sciences would label this superstition. Let Me just make one or two points here and then your readers will need to draw their own conclusions. First, I am real and the spiritual realm in which I dwell is real. I am trying to help mankind to find everlasting love, life, and happiness. Second, there is an inferior but still extremely powerful opposition led by the Devil. He tries his damndest to frustrate mankind from achieving these goals either by offering alternatives that don't really satisfy in the long run, or by trying to make people just plain miserable. Wouldn't it seem that people suffering from depression are the sad targets of his designs?

Interviewer: The Devil and his demons and all-it seems a bit far-fetched. Aren't there a lot of causes for depression that don't have their roots in the spiritual realm? For instance, there could be bereavement or the loss of one's job or a financial or medical calamity.

God: It is very true that these can trigger depression. I sympathize greatly that the loss of a loved one, receiving bad news about your health, or losing one's financial stability are all difficult experiences that can deeply hurt and can make one very sad. However, there is a distinct difference between mourning, or receiving bad news, or grappling with personal difficulties, and depression. Sad things happen in life. That is part of the living experience, and from those things

a great deal can be gained in the way of learning empathy and compassion. That is not a negative experience in the long run. But depression is when a person has given up hope. The Devil has taken a crisis and turned it into a disaster seemingly beyond repair.

Interviewer: You seem to be giving him a lot of credit.

God: Not credit, blame. Unfortunately, a lot of people like to stick Me with the blame for things that go wrong. I am enjoying an opportunity to lay the blame at the real culprit's door.

Interviewer: Well, what can be done about it? Placing the blame is not necessarily a cure.

God: No, it is not a cure, but realizing the cause can go a long way toward achieving the cure. The Devil can be beaten.

Interviewer: How?

God: Through My power, which is available to each and every person.

Interviewer: I assume You are alluding to prayer here.

God: Prayer can activate My power and focus it on the target. I do answer prayer, as I explained in a previous conversation we had.

Interviewer: Yes, but medication can be beneficial for these people, can't it? If the cause is spiritual, then why would medication work?

God: It is true that medication can sometimes help relieve the symptoms, but it doesn't cure the cause.

Interviewer: What do You say to the research on this subject that has shown that some people are this way because of chemical causes?

God: In some cases, yes, there is an imbalance, but this is not the general trend. If there is a chemical or hormonal imbalance in the body, there can be a degree of emotional uneasiness, where Satan finds occasion to plant negative or disparaging thoughts in the mind. It helps vastly to realize that these thoughts, which in turn lead to depression, come from the enemy of one's soul, who is seeking to discourage and drag you down. They are not reality.

So you see, the truth of the matter is that the root cause of deep depression is spiritual, even though the symptoms may be psychological or physical. If you treat the problem in the spiritual by prayer and getting the depressed person to understand Me and receive Jesus in his or her heart, then I guarantee there will be positive results. Let's move on to something more positive.

Interviewer: Well, I will heed Your wishes and leave this subject, but I will add that there will undoubtedly be some who disagree with You.

God: Perhaps. But the fact remains that there is a solution to depression through faith in Me and My love.

Interviewer: If You will allow me one more question on this topic: What about people who already have received Jesus into their hearts and yet at times feel depressed?

God: Again, I say that the best antidote is prayer. It is a tremendous help to those suffering from depression to realize that these negative and despairing thoughts come from the evil side of the spirit world. My truth, My love, My light is much stronger, and as soon as people let that in, it will start to wash out the darkness of the Devil's despair. But it often will take time and considerable perseverance to see this whole process through. That's why prayer and reading My Word, and seeking advice from those who deeply believe in Me, all help to combat this.

Interviewer: To finish up on happiness, then, am I right in concluding that knowing and loving You and loving and helping others is the key to happiness?

God: That is well summed up.

Interviewer: The next subject on my list is "success." I think most people want to be successful in life, even though their definitions of success vary. Lots of people would like to be rich or to achieve fame so that they are admired by others, perhaps even idolized. What do You regard as success?

God: To find and achieve your purpose for existence.

Interviewer: You have defined this earlier as loving You and loving others. Is that it?

God: If you do those two things, you will be a success. However, every individual has his own personal destiny which, if fulfilled, would make him even more successful.

Interviewer: That is interesting. We come preprogrammed to perform some great task, reach some great goal?

God: It depends on what you mean by "great."

Interviewer: Becoming president or prime minister or something like that.

God: I pity anyone wanting to become a head of state. No, that is greatness in man's eyes, which does not necessarily correspond with My idea of greatness.

Interviewer: Which is?

God: To be of great service to mankind.

Interviewer: But being a world or national leader would be of great service to mankind, wouldn't it?

God: I think that most people tend to think that politicians are more likely to be of great service to themselves or to the political system. Even the most idealistic politician is soon forced into compromise, and some are even corrupted by the political system. I think everyone is more likely to agree that someone like Mother Teresa is truly great.

Interviewer: She was a saint in every sense of the word, but You don't expect us all to attain that level of service and dedication, do You?

God: What a wonderful world it would be if everyone would, don't you think?

Interviewer: So You would have us all be like that?

God: If all were like that, then there would be no need for all to be like that. I am not expecting such heroics of everyone, but it would be wonderful if more were like her.

Interviewer: So she is Your idea of success.

God: She succeeded in her calling. She would not be persuaded from it, but pursued it with every ounce of spiritual and physical vigor that she could muster. I know that all people will not and could not do what she did, but they can do something to make the world around them a better place for others. I have designed mankind so that the giving of themselves to help others is the most satisfying thing that people can do. It makes every other measure of success pale by comparison.

Interviewer: If that is the case, why aren't more of us doing it?

God: Many do-a few in great ways, most in small ways. The thing that holds people back is selfishness.

Interviewer: But we are all selfish to some degree or another. It is human nature, the instinct for survival. If You intended us to be altruistic, which You have explained You would prefer, why did You program mankind with selfishness?

God: This world is a proving ground. Although there is selfishness inherent within man, there is also the ability to rise above it. Every individual has within him the potential to be a great force for good, if he only would.

Interviewer: Very interesting! Another area that most of us like to be successful in is in relationships. Relationships are myriad, of course, but is there a general rule for success?

God: Yes! Humility!

Interviewer: I thought You would say love.

God: Humility is love put into action. It regards the well-being and happiness of others as more important than one's own. Therefore humility is the key.

Interviewer: By definition, the opposite of humility is pride. Does it then stand to reason that pride is what will cause a relationship to fail?

God: Exactly!

Interviewer: But a sense of pride is ingrained in us since birth.

God: Pride builds walls between people. Humility builds bridges. It reaches out to others.

Interviewer: But we are told of the importance of self-esteem.

God: Having an appreciation of self-worth is good. Low self-esteem can and does lead to problems. However, I ask you to go further than this and esteem others more than yourself. That doesn't mean you should think less well of yourself.-That is a mouthful, isn't it? It means you should regard others as having at least some attributes or talents that are better than your own. That is pretty hard to do if you are stuck on yourself, so you must make an effort to look for the good side of others.

Interviewer: I have heard some say that needing to believe in God is a crutch and a symptom of low self-esteem.

God: That really is rubbish. Believing in Me can actually boost your self-esteem. If you'd think about it, you would see that you must be pretty valuable for God Himself to have sent His Son to die for you.

Interviewer: Indeed! I suppose it is a matter of perspective. But shouldn't we take pride in our achievements, abilities, and talents, etc.?

God: There is a fine line. You, of course, have a sense of satisfaction when you have done or made something worthwhile. But when people begin feeling that they are superior to others because of what they have done, then they are heading for disaster. Quite frankly, if you are hoping to be successful in a relationship, a swelled head is just about the last thing you need.

Interviewer: What do You see, then, as a successful relationship?

God: People in partnership with one or more others to achieve a greater good. People in partnership with others create synergy.

Interviewer: Synergy being defined as the combined effect of two or more being greater than the sum of their individual effects?

God: Yes. It is again part of the basic design. People working in combination with others can do more than they could have if they had all worked on their own. But in order for a relationship of any kind to truly prosper, there must be humility on the part of the participants.

Interviewer: I think I am not that clear on what You mean by humility.

God: Esteeming the other person better than yourself, as I mentioned earlier.

Interviewer: But what if the other person isn't as accomplished at things as I am?

God: Then that takes more humility.

Interviewer: Hmmm... That is easy to say.

God: Let Me explain further. Humility causes you to not hold yourself up as the great almighty one who is there to always save the day. It causes you to make an effort to see what the other person is bringing to the situation which you yourself cannot. Every person is different, so look for what you can admire in someone, some way in which you can look well on him, some reason he is needed. Humility does not lift itself up, but lifts up others.

Interviewer: Well, this is something we are not accustomed to doing naturally, because many of us feel our opinions are the best, our methods are probably the best, and so forth.

God: It is never easy for man to be humble. Man's tendency is to pride. But humility always pays off, whereas pride never will in the long run.

Interviewer: If this is hard for me to grasp, maybe it is because it just seems to me that You put all the wrong tendencies in man. Pride and selfishness are just two we have covered in this session. You still haven't explained why.

God: So man would need Me. The world is a giant demonstration to show that even a being as clever as man needs Me to be truly successful.

Interviewer: But is that fair? Why would You create us and then hobble us with traits that guarantee our ultimate failure?

God: You are being rather hard on Me today. Or maybe you are just thinking it will be too hard for you! Remember that I said I would help you to do whatever I ask you to. I did not make you perfect; that is true. But I did create in you the ability to choose the way that would lead to what will be the most perfect existence that you could imagine. Man also was created with the freedom of choice-to choose to follow Me or not.

I have tried to make the bad effects and fruits of pride extremely obvious. Pride promotes love of self more than love of Me or others; thus it wars against choosing My way. I am demonstrating to everyone the rewards of following Me in humility, rather than following oneself in pride.

Interviewer: That is a lot to grasp.

God: Yes, but it is again a matter of faith. If you believe what I am saying and then do it, you will find success in relationships, as in other areas of life.

Interviewer: How about health? What is the secret to good health?

God: Generally it is to live right, eat right, exercise right, and have a positive attitude.

Interviewer: Sickness and accidents are the bane of man's existence.

God: The human body was not created to be indestructible. It requires care and maintenance.

Interviewer: But why sickness and disease? Seems that they just make life miserable.

God: You are not sick the majority of the time, are you?

Interviewer: No. But why be sick at all?

God: Sickness is often a consequence of one's own actions. People have to accept personal responsibility for those. But there are many reasons for sickness. A lot is learned through taking care of oneself or others. It will certainly help people to appreciate the glorified new bodies that they will eventually receive in Heaven. You can never appreciate good health until you are sick.

Interviewer: Well, I do appreciate good health, but it is cause for reflection that there could be benefits to sickness as well.

God: Sickness often results in people either coming to know Me, or if they already do, coming to know Me in a deeper way. Desperation causes people to reach out for divine help, and then I can step in and help. It also gives them more understanding of others and compassion for them.

Interviewer: You are talking about divine healing here.

God: I can and do heal people in answer to prayer.

Interviewer: Do You do this every time You are asked?-Heal them, I mean?

God: I answer prayer in every instance, but it might not necessarily be with healing, or the healing may not be immediate. There are many factors involved, and this is a rather complex subject. But please do understand that this world isn't the be-all and end-all. It has been created to be but a transitory testing and learning ground for mortal man. One cannot judge Me only on what happens in this world. Mankind was created to eventually live with Me in Heaven. If you can keep your eyes on that goal, then it will make whatever pain and sickness you may endure in this life much more bearable.

Interviewer: I think the manufacturing industry calls that "planned obsolescence," when things are made not to last long so that customers will come back in a few years to get the new model. It seems people would wonder why You didn't make us according to the design that You apparently plan to upgrade us to.

God: Heaven and all that comes with it is to be looked forward to. Earth is the proving ground. The things learned in this life shape and define your character for eternity. Some things can only be fully appreciated and understood from the experiences of this life. Good health can only be appreciated when one has sickness to compare it to. Companionship can only be truly valued when one has known loneliness, mercy when one has suffered harsh justice. In the world that is to come, your past experiences on earth will give you depth and richness of character that would otherwise have been unattainable.

Interviewer: Well, I hope that any sickness I suffer has that effect. About divine or faith healing, why is it that some people apparently get miraculously healed while others don't, and perhaps even die?

God: It all has to do with their purpose and destiny in life. For some it is simply time for them to come home to the spirit world. Heaven is infinitely better than this life. In a way, holding someone back could be regarded as not letting someone graduate from university. What is better? That the student get his degree or not? If you can look at it from that perspective, staying in this world is the worse of the two options. But I heal others in order for them to in turn use the rest of their lives to benefit others and as a testament to My power. It is proof that I am real.

Interviewer: That explains why people die, but what about those left gravely handicapped or with some sort of debilitating and long-term illness? It seems that rather than draw things out, it would be better to either heal them or take them "home," as You put it.

God: Each case is different. The people are different and the circumstances are different, so I can't give you a pat answer that covers everything. There can be all sorts of reasons, and in most cases many reasons are involved. But let Me ask you something: If you are so concerned, what are you doing about it? Some people criticize Me for allowing this bad thing and that bad thing, but are they doing anything to help alleviate whatever pain and suffering they are talking about? If people are sick in the hospital or shut-ins, are these critics of Mine visiting them to try to bring a little cheer into their lives? Perhaps the reason people are sick has something to do with them not having the friendship or companionship of other people.

Interviewer: You seem to enjoy tossing the ball back into our court. I feel there is not a lot that I or anyone as an individual can do.

God: But there is always something you can do. My proposal to you is: At least do what you can, and I can do the rest.

Interviewer: The old "God helps those who help themselves" aphorism.

God: In a way, yes, but it's more than that. God helps those who help others. Man is not supposed to spend his time only looking out for himself, but he is supposed to be looking to help others. Won't you help others in need? You may be praying, "God help this or that situation," when in fact I might be trying to help that situation by sending you to be that help. You could be the answer to someone's prayer!

Interviewer: Interesting thought and something to keep in mind should I find myself in some such situation. I have been giving You a bit of a rough go of things today. I apologize if I have sounded critical. Would You like to say anything in closing?

God: Apology accepted. I could preach a sermon, but the world has heard lots of those. What people want to see is sermons in action. Think about it: What can you do to make the world a better place? The power to be a force for good lies within everyone, even if it is only in little ways. Make your part of the world a bit more heavenly by bringing a touch of Heaven in the way of love and kindness to those around you. If you feel you haven't the strength to be this way but would like to, call on Me to help. I will, I promise you.

Ethical and Social Issues

Interview Seven

Interviewer: Once again, thank You for consenting to these interviews.

God: I am happy to do so. It has always been My intention that My views on issues be understood, so I welcome the opportunity to answer these and any questions you or anyone, for that matter, might have.

Interviewer: I would like to focus on social and ethical issues today. The world has reached a few milestones in the last year. We have passed the year-2001 mark and are now in a new millennium. The world population is now in excess of 6 billion. It seems we are barreling into the future without much foresight as to what the outcome will be. Did You ever intend this planet to be so crowded?

God: It was not My intention that some parts of it would be so crowded, but as far as the overall numbers, I did, of course, realize that this would happen.

Interviewer: So You are not concerned with overpopulation, that we would become so numerous that earth's resources would not be able to stretch to accommodate the demand?

God: I am concerned with the unfair distribution of the earth's resources-that some hoard and consume well above what they should, and others are dying of hunger and thirst because of it.

Interviewer: But why design the world so that some areas have abundance and others suffer scarcity?

God: The world was not designed that way. Man has run the world for millennia, and the inequality of distribution is a result of what he has done, not Me.

Interviewer: The greatest need of all is water. In some areas it is abundant; in others it is almost absent altogether. It seems that at least for that, You have to take responsibility.

God: There are lots of reasons for the lack of water in some areas, and nearly all of them are the result of man's poor stewardship. Even today man is destroying the rain forest and sowing the seeds for more disasters. The world's ecology has been pretty hardy up till this time, but man's continued, unabated assault on it is the reason for disaster.

Interviewer: Sounds like God is "green."

God: In a way I suppose I am. But there is a limit. The most precious assets in the world are human lives. They must come first. Man should make the most of My creation, the world I made, in order to sustain humanity. The greedy exploitation that is so prevalent is indeed wrong, but to put the survival of animals and woodlands before that of mankind is also wrong. The truth lies in the middle. If earth's resources are reasonably utilized to the equitable benefit of all, so that both mankind and the environment are sustained, then that is right.

Interviewer: My goodness! You are not only green, but You sound like a socialist with all this equal benefit talk.

God: From each according to his ability, to each according to his need, is My own slogan.

Interviewer: Whoa! You're quoting Marx!

God: Marx was stealing ideas from Me-from the Bible.

Interviewer: The Bible promotes socialism?

God: The Bible promotes love of Me and mankind. The ideal istic society set up by Jesus' disciples-after His ascension-was a society where His followers contributed their goods to common use, and then those who had needs had these supplied by those who had excess.

Interviewer: Obviously this way of life didn't last long .

God: Many religious communities still practice this lifestyle today and it works as well for them as it did for those early disciples.

Interviewer: However, communism is a failed system.

God: I am not talking about the godless communist political system. That was doomed to failure because it left Me out of the picture. It was based on enforced sharing where the powerful, pretending to be the protectors of the common man, enriched and empowered themselves at the common man's expense. No, I hold no truck with communism. What I am talking about is a society based on love and consideration of others. If everyone were concerned about making sure the needs of others were met, then in turn his or her needs would also be met.

Interviewer: Sounds like a utopian pipe dream. People just don't live and function like that. Maybe there are some saints that could, but for most of us, any sort of consideration for others doesn't go much further than our own immediate families-and sometimes not even that far, sad to say.

God: It is only possible to have this kind of love if you have My love as the motivator.

Interviewer: But there are millions of people who claim to have Your love motivating them, and it doesn't seem to make much difference in their lifestyles. True, they may act a little more religious, but it seems their religion doesn't reach down to their wallets.

God: If your religion doesn't reach down into your heart and cause you to be compassionately motivated to help others, then it is not much of a religion.

Interviewer: Communism's currently victorious competitor is capitalism. What are Your thoughts on capitalism?

God: Capitalism certainly seems more attractive than communism because most see it as an opportunity to get rich. It holds that "carrot" in front of people's noses, and so they labor their whole lives within a system that exploits the many for the benefit of a few. Because there is the possibility that one day they might strike gold, people continue on this treadmill. No, the political-economic systems of the world are not ordained by Me.

Interviewer: What system is ordained by You?

God: The Garden of Eden was the ideal. With few exceptions, everything from then on was a poor substitute.

Interviewer: So Your original plan was for us humans to be in an idyllic world where all was love and beauty. Wouldn't we all grow rather lazy in that type of environment?

God: I can hear most of your readers saying, "Speak for yourself." It was idyllic, but Adam and Eve were far from lazy.

Interviewer: You are saying that they were busy doing something?

God: Goodness gracious, yes! They had the whole of the Garden to tend to.

Interviewer: Oh? I thought they would have just lain around in that paradise, sipping the Eden equivalent of piña coladas and soaking up the sunshine.

God: No, no! They were busy looking after the whole place and raising a family. Anyone who has raised kids knows that's quite a task.

Interviewer: What? Cain, Abel, et al., were born in the Garden of Eden?

God: Cain and Abel, yes, but not all the "et al."

Interviewer: Funny! One sort of has the impression that the kids came afterwards, when Adam was out there toiling and sweating away in the field to produce his food. Like having kids was part of the Curse for eating the forbidden fruit.

God: The Curse? You think having kids is a curse?

Interviewer: Well, no, but...

God: Oh, you think that sex was part of the Curse?

Interviewer: Well, that is the impression one has-that sex and sinlessness are not really that compatible.

God: Oh dear, you are mixed up. No, sex was around from the beginning. Adam and Eve had plenty of it and had children long before they had to leave the Garden of Eden.

Interviewer: So sex is okay with You?

God: Do you think that an act of love which can result in the birth of a whole new being would not be okay with Me?

Interviewer: Some might have that impression.

God: Well, let's lay that impression to rest right now. Sex is the ultimate in expressing physically the love that a man and a woman have for each other. I made it fun, pleasurable, and just about downright irresistible. I love for people to express their love for each other by making love. Why else would it be called "making love"? No, there is nothing unhealthy or wrong about it, and neither is it the result of sin or the Curse.

Interviewer: Nevertheless, it is exclusively for marriage.

God: Who said exclusively for marriage?

Interviewer: I assumed that is what You want.

God: It does not have to be exclusively for marriage. If two people are of age and want to have sex, it has to be decided along the lines of whether it is good for them and does not harm others.

Interviewer: Those are the only rules?

God: There are a lot of things to consider before having sex, so it is not something to rush into without much forethought. But this is a huge subject that we could perhaps cover more in a later interview. You were going to ask Me about social issues.

Interviewer: Indeed. Related to this topic, the questions of birth control and abortion are ones I would like to cover. ... I notice a sadness in the atmosphere.

God: Abortion is one thing that saddens Me beyond measure.

Interviewer: Some regard abortion as more humane in the long run, in order to keep the child from feeling unwanted all his or her life. Many of the mothers are single and can't afford to raise a child.

God: There are alternatives. Once a baby is conceived, it is ideal that that baby be born and raised by a caring mother and father. If the birth mother and father cannot or will not do this, then it would be better for the baby to be adopted by those who can. Sometimes the grandparents or other relatives can help raise the child. Another alternative is coop living with other single parents. Sharing the load helps to lighten it for everyone.

I would like to add at this point that I do have great sympathy and understanding for the mothers who get pregnant and feel they have to have an abortion. It is testimony of how hard and cruel the world has become that a child, the greatest gift that I can bestow upon a woman, is now regarded as an unbearable liability in order to achieve a desirable life. That "civilization" is reduced to this level, that killing babies is a preferable and even desirable alternative, is proof as to how barbaric society really is.

Interviewer: So you agree with those who protest against abortion clinics...

God: Taking the life of an unborn child is wrong, but having said that, I also feel that much of what those who protest against abortion do is wrong as well. Instead of spending their energy protesting against abortion, they would do more good if they would work toward helping women who feel that abortion is their only choice. They should work to make adoption easier. They should consider adopting an unwanted child themselves. They should work to find employment for women who can't afford to have the child. There is a lot of positive work they could do to help alleviate the "need" for some women to have an abortion.

Interviewer: Then again on the other end of the scale are those who desperately want babies but can't have them. There are many methods to improve fertility, and many opt to try this. Do You have thoughts on this?

God: To want to be a parent is a noble ambition, and I salute those who try all that they can to have children. I would, however, say that with so many children who need to be adopted, it would generally be better to consider adoption rather than putting so much time and effort, often fruitlessly, into trying to artificially conceive and then trying to carry the baby to full term.

Interviewer: Many would if the adoption procedures were not so rigorous.

God: That is true. It is sad that the world considers it so important to so rigorously screen those who want to adopt that often during the screening process the child has to stay in foster care facilities that are far from ideal. That is the ludicrous nature of today's society-in an effort to protect the child, they actually condemn the child to a substandard upbringing. But this is the way of the world. Sometimes when men and women try to do good and to legislate righteousness, the actual outcome is worse.

Interviewer: Why is this? It seems these types of laws are set in place by well-meaning people who have in mind the best interests of those affected.

God: These problems arise because without Me, man cannot really achieve the best results. If I am left out of the picture, the result is a disappointment at best and a disaster at worst. And usually it is the average working man and woman who gets the raw end of the deal. If laws and efforts of this nature-planning society and communities and families-are to succeed, I must be involved. In the world to come, there will not be these types of problems because the governing principle will be love and not law. Whatever is the best outcome for all concerned will be the criterion, not that the letter of the law needs to be followed to the minutest detail. It is all part of My demonstration to the world that My way is infinitely better.

Interviewer: Some may feel that sounds a bit arrogant.

God: Some may, and that is because I have probably challenged some premise that they hold dear. In saying this, I do not wish to offend anyone. I am simply stating a fact: that the ways of man and the ways of this world are in the end woefully inadequate in providing the maximum quality of life that people could have. It is showing people that their dreams cannot be fully satisfied in this life. It will also give them a much greater appreciation of the perfection in the world to come.

Interviewer: Back to abortions for one minute, if I may. What then happens to the spirits of these children who die before birth?

God: They come back to Heaven.

Interviewer: Some might say that is much better than being stuck here and unwanted.

God: The spirit of man in this era is intended to live a life on earth. When that does not happen, the purpose for the lives of these little ones is not completed.

Interviewer: So do they get another chance?

God: Many do, yes.

Interviewer: But not all?

God: For some, there is not the opportunity.

Interviewer: So they remain incomplete?

God: The incompleteness in their lives is compensated for.

Interviewer: Compensated for? You mean in Heaven?

God: Yes. These children are precious to Me, and when they have been rejected by their earthly mothers and fathers, and are not able to live out their tenure on earth, I personally receive them when they arrive. I take them in My arms, I cherish them, I bless them. And then I find a special place for each of them, so that he or she never feels unwanted again.

Interviewer: So the basic outcome is okay then. All's well that ends well.

God: I would not let one of these innocents suffer because of the deeds of others. But the original plan mapped out for that particular child is not fully fulfilled.

Interviewer: Does that make a difference? Is the original plan the preferred plan and anything else second best?

God: My original plan is always best. Look at the Garden of Eden again. That was My original plan. Would you prefer to be living there or where you are now?

Interviewer: Good point. But some would say we are wiser for our mistakes.

God: Wiser, yes, but not necessarily better off. Adam and Eve certainly were wiser for having sinned, but one would hardly regard them as being better off.

Interviewer: I imagine that since You regard abortion as wrong, that You don't find euthanasia or mercy killing agreeable either?

God: Human life is a precious commodity. Who is man to say when killing is the merciful thing to do?

Interviewer: It would seem that if a person's on life support and it is only the life-support system that is keeping him or her alive, then there is not much for that person to live for.

God: With someone in that condition it is another story. But I am not saying that in the case of someone on life support, it is always good to "pull the plug." Sometimes people have been revived from comas and other times there have been miraculous healings. All that should be taken into account. But if someone is alive and is able to stay alive without life support, then his or her life should not be ended prematurely. If someone would naturally die and is just being kept alive artificially in a comatose state, then why prevent that one from crossing over into the better world to come? But if life is self-sustainable, then that person should live.

Interviewer: Let's tackle another life-and-death issue: capital punishment. Should someone be executed for a heinous crime?

God: As I said before, life is a precious thing, but if someone uses that life to perpetrate great evil, then he forfeits the right to that life. Man was created to live a good life, and if he instead lives an evil one, then he must be willing to accept the consequences. I am for mercy, and mercy is greater than justice. But in the world people are subject to the laws of the land. If people commit, as you put it, heinous crimes, they forsake mercy. Then they must be ready to accept justice, and that justice is that they sometimes have to pay for their actions with their lives. Having therefore stated the general principle, I must also state that the circumstances in each case must be taken into account. Capital punishment is extremely severe, but there are times when it is the only just penalty.

Interviewer: Can You state what type of crimes those would be?

God: Earth's civilizations, regardless of culture or geographical location, have generally agreed as to what these are. They have generally been those that have caused death or were intended to, or caused extreme pain and suffering to their victims. It is very difficult for Me to speak in more than the most general terms on this issue because again, as I have said, circumstances vary so much from case to case that a blanket statement is impossible.

Interviewer: But You believe that there are times when it is necessary.

God: At times it is the only just sentence.

Interviewer: How would Your seeming ban on capital punishment in the commandment "Thou shalt not kill" fit into all this?

God: That commandment was to individuals, not to the duly-recognized bodies appointed to mete out sentences for crimes committed.

Interviewer: But You say so much in the Bible about forgiveness, that we should forgive those who have sinned against us. You even said that You forgive everyone who asks for it. Are these crimes too monstrous for You and us to forgive?

God: I forgive all those who ask Me. And you as an individual-for your own sake if nothing else-should forgive others who ask for forgiveness. But each one must still face the consequences of his actions.

Interviewer: This seems contradictory.

God: As an individual you have the power to forgive someone who has done you a wrong, even a great wrong. That someone may still have to answer to the state for his actions. That is largely out of your control.

Interviewer: So if someone killed someone who was very dear to me, You are saying that I should forgive the killer? That sounds like an extremely hard thing for me to do.

God: I am not saying it wouldn't be extremely hard, but if you let bitterness fester in your heart because you don't forgive him, you will suffer for that. Bitterness will make your life miserable. Revenge and justice-seeking will not heal the wounds. The only way bitterness can be cured is by you making a conscious action to forgive. Bitterness has destroyed many a life-mostly the lives of those who harbor it and the lives of their loved ones.

Interviewer: What about suicide? Is it forgivable?

God: You mean by Me?

Interviewer: Yes.

God: Everything is forgivable. Suicide is, however, extremely sad. Don't you think it is sad that people are in such despair that they find no solution other than to end their lives? In every life there is such hope and promise. Suicide is often as much a testimony against society and those around the person as it is against the person himself.

Interviewer: We talked about euthanasia. Assisted suicide is very close to that, the difference being that the person administers the toxin themselves. The people we generally hear about who have done this are very debilitated with an illness that has reduced their lives to what they feel are unbearable levels. In that instance it would seem that there is no hope.

God: So where would you draw the line between no hope and hope?

Interviewer: I don't know. That is why I am asking You.

God: Then the safest thing to do is leave it to Me and I will bring people into the next world when I know their time has come.

Interviewer: So there are never justifiable reasons for someone committing suicide?

God: That is an extremely broad question that defies an answer. If someone heroically gave his or her life trying to save someone else, that could be regarded in the broadest terms as suicide. Yet I think everyone would laud the person who was so selfless.

Interviewer: Some even contend that Jesus more or less committed suicide by going to Jerusalem when He did. I believe He even told His disciples that He was going there to die, so that it was premeditated. What do You say to this?

God: Jesus gave His life selflessly so that all who would come to believe on Him could have eternal life. It is a very self-righteous person who would claim that Jesus was committing suicide.

Interviewer: Agreed! But I had to bring it up because it is one of those questions that comes up when talking about this subject. Any final words on suicide?

God: Those who take their own lives and thus end them prematurely miss out on some of the things that they were supposed to encounter and learn on earth. So when they arrive up here, they have some catching up to do. Their entry into the afterlife is not as happy as it could have been. In fact, for some it is rather ignominious and they are so wracked by guilt that they have some serious rehabilitation to go through.

Yet, I do not condemn those who commit suicide, but their dying at that time was needless. Some can be so depressed that they are not in their right mind. But while there is life, there is hope.

Interviewer: So You are saying hold on, hope is around the corner?

God: Yes, as has been borne out many times in the stories of those who were at the end of their rope, all hope seeming to be gone, and they then found something that gave them the will to live. If you are going to throw your life away, why not "throw it away" by immersing yourself in a good cause?

Interviewer: Young people seem especially prone to suicidal thoughts.

God: Yes, but their whole lives are before them. There is so much to live for. Adolescence is a turbulent time.

Interviewer: Just a few more questions at the moment, if I may, on a new subject, that of addiction. No one really wants to be addicted to a vice such as drugs, or other things that are perceived as vices. Got any magic cure?

God: Addictions have a more powerful hold on some people than others. There are usually a lot of factors involved also. The first step in a recovery is to pray, to ask Me for help. Prayer is always effective. Prayer mobilizes supernatural resources that are able to overcome natural obstacles. So if someone wants to overcome an addiction or even just a bad habit, the first thing that is within his or her power to do immediately is to pray...

Interviewer: Some might say that they have prayed and it was all to no avail.

God: You didn't let Me finish. I said prayer was the first step, but not the only one. Prayer is important because it acknowledges the need for strength greater than what one possesses and help beyond what one can do for himself. Next, there must be a belief that I will do something in response to that prayer. To get the answer, one has to believe that there will be one forthcoming.

Interviewer: That's sounds like positive thinking.

God: It does! But it goes much further than positive thinking. Positive thinking can get you in a positive frame of mind, which in turn can give you more power to accomplish things that were difficult. But belief in My help can help you achieve things that not only border on the impossible but actually are impossible. Praying and believing will then give you power to overcome the addiction or the habit.

Interviewer: How does this happen?

God: I will answer prayers that are prayed in faith-belief in My ability to answer prayer-and I will give the person praying more power than he or she would normally have. This in turn will give one the will to overcome. The human will is a powerful force, and when augmented by spiritual power it is well nigh unstoppable. Once the will is on the right side, then progress is possible.

Interviewer: Is that it? Presto, and change?

God: It is the most important first step, but not the only one. Then it is important to replace the harmful vice with a desire for something beneficial, and to continue to maintain a strong desire to change. Nothing can be more beneficial for someone than a strong faith in Me, which can continually be augmented by regular reading of My Word.

Interviewer: You make it sound easy. Some people have tried everything and still have a really rough go.

God: The plan is easy, but for some it is a struggle. I will not gloss over the difficulties that some face. What I have stated here is the pith and core of the remedy, but implementing it and striving to carry it through are not necessarily going to be easy for everyone. But the rewards of doing it and succeeding will be a life turned around from misery to one filled with joy and zest.

Interviewer: People will still need encouragement from others.

God: Oh, yes. The moral support and especially the prayers of others are vital elements to an addict's recovery.

Interviewer: You have given us a lot to ponder in this session. Thank You again for these times together.

God: Thank you. I look forward to our next session.

Education and New Revelations

Interview Eight

Interviewer: Most people believe a good education is paramount to a successful life. Many focus large amounts of time, resources and energy toward getting an education for themselves, planning it for their children, or fretting about the abysmal state it apparently has descended to in many places. It is a big subject and worth soliciting Your opinion on.

God: It is a big subject. Care to be more specific about what you want My opinion on?

Interviewer: Well, I suppose the big question is, is it really that important?

God: It depends on the degree of education you're talking about. It is important to learn things and not be unskilled and ignorant.

Interviewer: You are talking about a very basic education then.

God: Everyone has to start with the basics.

Interviewer: What about higher education?

God: Certain professions-such as being a surgeon, to cite one example-do require further years of study before one can safely practice on the job. But in most cases, you have to ask yourself what is the point of attending college for your "higher" education.

Interviewer: In most societies you need a higher education to land the better jobs.

God: And what does that mean, a "better" job?

Interviewer: The one that brings with it a better livelihood and quality of life.

God: Are you sure about the quality of life aspect?

Interviewer: Why do I feel that I am the one being interviewed here?

God: Because I am asking the questions. (Chuckles.) I am trying to get you to narrow down the question and clearly state where you are headed.

Interviewer: A higher education is understood to be the doorway to a successful life. Do You agree or disagree?

God: The reasoning for that is that most people won't get a higher education, so that those who do will be able to move into positions where they will be over the people who don't. But if everyone gets a higher education-which everyone seems to be admonished to do-then who will you end up being over? So the premise on which everyone is encouraged to get a higher education is basically flawed.

Interviewer: It is true that people go to college so they can get a degree, land a better and hopefully more fulfilling job and also make more money. But they want the money to provide a higher standard of living for themselves and their family and also, some I daresay, so they can give to good causes. What is wrong with that?

God: What you have just stated is probably the credo of most people in the world today. It is true that there are good aspects to that in that you want to be able to amply provide and care for those you love and also give to charity on the side. However, this also locks so many into a rat race to where the pursuit of money consumes their whole lives. The principle I laid down from the beginning was that if you give your lives trying to help and care for your fellow men, then I would take care of you. True, you may not end up with riches or great influence and power. but you will have an inner peace and well-being that those who have all those other things cannot buy at any price.

Interviewer: And yet the citizens of rich nations enjoy a better life than those of poor ones.

God: Poorer nations look to the Developed World and see people who look better off than themselves and attribute this to education. In part they are right, but the principal reason these others are "better off" is because they hog the world's resources. The current way the world works is that for someone to be better off, someone else has to be worse off. There is often an underlying selfish purpose in striving for a higher education. Most people are not attempting to get one to help humanity; they basically want to help themselves. I am not saying that there is not some more noble motivation with some people, but the dog-eat-dog world of your society, which includes the hallowed institutions of higher education, often stifles that.

Interviewer: Aren't You being rather harsh?

God: I am showing My disappointment.

Interviewer: Why would it be so disappointing? I mean, here is humanity taking the knowledge that You have revealed to us and then expanding on it. One would think You would be proud of Your creation for not just being content with what we have, but going forward.

God: I think the "going forward" part can be disputed. Humanity has just concluded the most brutal, murderous, and barbaric century of its tenure on earth. I scarcely think that is going forward. Over 100 million people have died in wars in the last 100 years, and while at the beginning of the century most of those being killed were combatants, now it is mostly unarmed civilians, especially women and children. That is by anyone's definition barbarism to a horrific degree. Man's quest for knowledge has excelled in areas that can result in the total annihilation of life on earth. The amount of money spent on war and preparing for war is almost incomprehensible. The "best and the brightest" are sought out and recruited into the military-industrial complex, where they put their considerable skills into developing even more destructive weapons. No, I would say humanity's "progress" has been anything but progress.

Interviewer: Aren't You painting with a very broad brush here? There is a tremendous amount of research in the areas of medicine, agriculture, the environment, and many other areas, which are dedicated to humanity's good.

God: That is the standard argument, and I agree that much good has been accomplished by those with true intentions to help others. But take the amount of money and other resources that go into the weapons industry and compare that to what is spent in these other areas and you will see that the comparison is really pathetic.

Interviewer: But even if there is a lot of money going into this, there are a lot of side benefits derived from this research.

God: Couldn't those side benefits be derived from research directly into those fields?

Interviewer: Yes, I suppose You are right.

God: Human life is the most precious thing in this world, yet humanity spends the greatest amount of its resources and energy in finding ways to destroy it. Clearly you must understand that this is something that I cannot allow to go on much longer.

Interviewer: So You plan to intervene?

God: I have planned to intervene from the very beginning, but in some ways man has dictated the pace. If I don't intervene soon, man will have left Me nothing to intervene for.

Interviewer: When will this be?

God: That is another subject.

Interviewer: Yes, of course, but You do realize that we have touched on a very interesting theme here, and one I will bring up later, if I may.

God: Absolutely.

Interviewer: What about evolution? Much is made of the idea that mankind and all other creatures evolved from more primitive species. I suppose asking You this question may sound a bit silly, but what are Your feelings on the subject?

God: I am firmly in the camp of those who believe in Intelligent Design.

Interviewer: I sort of thought You would be. But did You use the evolutionary process to create the world?

God: There is no evolutionary process-one species evolving into another as people generally understand it-so it would be rather hard for Me to use it.

Interviewer: So You are saying that evolution is more or less a nonstarter.

God: It is an intriguing theory with no basis in fact. I say "intriguing" because man is intrigued by it, not Me. Actually, it is diabolical. It provided man a "scientific" reason-and I say scientific with My

rather considerable tongue in My cheek-not to believe in Me. The greatest testimony to a creator is the creation. A masterpiece of a painting is a tribute to the artist who painted it. One acknowledges his genius because one has seen the results of it. Likewise, a remarkable invention is a tribute to its remarkable inventor. So you can imagine how I feel when My handiwork is attributed to the work of the handiwork itself. It really is an absurd concept when one looks at it with even the faintest degree of logic.

It strikes Me as the utmost in bigotry, too, that those who champion evolution's authenticity refuse to allow the science of creationism to be taught as a counterbalance. The champions of evolution often portray themselves as the defenders of free thought, but in their hypocrisy they refuse to allow people, especially impressionable young students, to freely have access to information other than their own favored creed. It is not so much that someone came up with a bizarre and illogical theory that flies in the face of hard scientific evidence that bothers Me, rather it is that this is foisted on people as the fact of evolution when it is known that it is anything but factual. As you can tell, I tend to get fairly worked up over the subject.

Interviewer: So it is a hoax?

God: A perfect word for it.

Interviewer: But what about dinosaurs? Are they real?

God: They are not real now, but they were.

Interviewer: But don't they give credence to the theory of evolution?

God: That a range of species that were once plentiful on the earth and are now extinct doesn't give proof to the theory of evolution. There are species becoming extinct all the time.

Interviewer: But I have always had the impression that they are somewhere on the evolutionary ladder.

God: No. There were many kinds of dinosaurs, but they were all distinctly unique and didn't evolve from anything; nor did they turn into anything.

Interviewer: Well, what happened to them?

God: The vast majority were killed in the great flood.

Interviewer: You mean Noah and the Ark and all that.

God: Yes.

Interviewer: You said the majority of them. Why not all of them?

God: Because two of each kind were on the Ark.

Interviewer: You mean that he had dinosaurs on the Ark?

God: Why not? I instructed him to take two of every kind of animal, male and female. Except for some species, which I told him to take seven pairs of.

Interviewer: Why haven't they survived? The other animals did.

God: The climate of the earth after the flood was not so kind to the dinosaurs, just as it wasn't to some other species. They were not able to adapt to their new environment, so they died off.

Interviewer: So the flood was a real event and Noah a real person?

God: Definitely.

Interviewer: But a flood that covered the whole earth sounds preposterous. Where would all that water come from?

God: The conditions prevalent in the world and atmospheric heavens in those days were far different than what exists today. You can't judge what was by what now is.

Interviewer: So the Genesis account of creation is completely factual?

God: The Genesis account is wholly factual, though it is admittedly very brief.

Interviewer: In retrospect, should You have made it longer?

God: That is an interesting thought. But no, it is enough. What more should I have said there?

Interviewer: Well, perhaps a little about the mechanisms You used. I mean, to say something like "the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters" seems to leave a fair bit of the picture out. What were You doing, what were You thinking?

God: I was doing one thing at a time. I had to create one thing at time in the right progression. As for what I was thinking, I was thinking about the beautiful place I was going to create.

Interviewer: You had foreknowledge about what was going to happen?

God: You mean the fall of Adam and Eve?

Interviewer: Yes, but not only that. I mean the wars and other things that were going to ravage the world in the centuries to come.

God: Yes, I did.

Interviewer: So why didn't You throw in the towel at the very beginning? I mean, why bother, since it looks like things didn't turn out as beautifully as You had planned?

God: This world can be very beautiful. And the reasons that much of it is not can usually be traced back to man. But one always has to realize that this world isn't the final product. It is a testing ground and a giant demonstration. It is a testing ground for humankind and a demonstration to show humanity that when left to their own devices, they don't do a terribly good job of things. Thus they will be grateful for My authority, presence, and guidance in the world to come.

Interviewer: I think we covered some of this ground before. I apologize for making You repeat Yourself.

God: Not a problem.

Interviewer: So, back to education. What would You like to see man educated in?

God: In those things that will help him live in peace and harmony with the rest of his kind.

Interviewer: Which would be...

God: The skills involved in communication, the skills involved in providing a sufficient livelihood for himself and his neighbors.

Interviewer: That's it?

God: Basically, yes.

Interviewer: Basic is just about the right word for it.

God: There is a lot in those two categories.

Interviewer: I suppose there is, but I think You have just handed a lot of people in the field of education pink slips.

God: I don't think that they need worry that much, because in this world they'll keep their jobs. But in the world to come they may need to choose something along the lines I just talked about to be their field of educational expertise.

Interviewer: Surely in the next world there wouldn't be a need for educators.

God: On the contrary, learning doesn't cease once you cross over. In the world to come, there are limitless opportunities to learn. And those who learn will require teachers. So there is a role for educators.

Interviewer: Well, why would we bother? We'll know everything we need to know once we get there, won't we?

God: Goodness, no! There will be lots to learn in the world to come. This world is only a shadow of that one, so if you thought that there was a lot to learn here, then you are going to be surprised at how much there is to learn there. Man has an inquisitiveness that is part of human nature. That part of his nature will live on, and there are limitless opportunities to learn and experience new things.

Interviewer: I notice that whenever You talk about the next world You tend to wax lyrical about it.

God: It's worth waxing lyrical about. I want to make it sound so tempting-which it is, and really I am hardly scratching the surface of all there is to tell-that everyone will want to go there.

Interviewer: It does sound inviting. Well, just a few more questions, if I may, sort of in the same vein. We discussed evolutionists trying to disprove intelligent creation, and by extension, a creator. Can science prove the reverse, that there is a creator, that You exist?

God: Scientists, if they honestly review the data, will always come back to the conclusion that there is an intelligent design behind the universe. Some who differ on this point may howl at this and say that I am accusing them of being charlatans, but sometimes it is a case of those hit that howl. I know that there are plenty of avenues that invite investigation and speculation, and I am not calling scientists dishonest if they sometimes make wrong postulations along the way. I am saying that once they review the data objectively, they will have to come to the conclusion that this all didn't happen by accident. And so if it didn't happen by accident, then it happened by design, so there has to be someone or ones who designed it. So although you can't isolate Me in a test tube and say, "Aha, here He is," one can with rational reasoning, even scientific reasoning, conclude that I exist.

Interviewer: You said something in that last answer that made me think of another question. You said "someone or ones designed it." Much is made of the Christian idea of the Godhead being a Trinity-three persons in one, yet at the same time distinct. Are You three?

God: It is a concept that countless theologians and learned men have struggled over. They perhaps would do better if they were like the young child who just takes it in stride and doesn't worry about it. The Trinity is composed of Myself, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. We are three distinct beings, while at the same time being united in every way in Our essence.

Interviewer: You have a hierarchy with Yourself at the top?

God: Yes, but that is a very simplistic way of seeing it. It really cannot be comprehended from your viewpoint. Things like this become more understandable once you pass to the spirit world.

Interviewer: You say more understandable. It sounds like we won't really understand even then.

God: If you could understand everything fully, then you would be God.

Interviewer: What about the old question of "who created God?"

God: Because you are bound by time in your current state, you always try to understand things in a temporal way. In the realm to come you will not be trapped in time, so you will understand things better. I didn't need a point in time to be created, as does everything in your world. In your minds the best way to think of it is that I have always existed and that I do not need a creator.

Interviewer: You mentioned the Holy Spirit a few answers before. What role does He play in all of this?

God: It would be more correct to say "She." She is the feminine part of the Trinity.

Interviewer: Feminine?

God: Is that so shocking?

Interviewer: Well, not quite what I imagine everyone thought. But what role does She play?

God: She is the spirit of love that goes out into the world to bring peace and joy to people's hearts. Just like people can receive Jesus into their lives, so they can receive the Holy Spirit, and She can fill them with joy, peace, happiness, faith, and much more. She is also the instrument by which various gifts and talents are distributed-gifts such as wisdom, knowledge, faith, miracles, healing, prophecy, speaking in mysterious tongues, and the interpretation of such tongues.

Interviewer: Could You explain what these "tongues" are? I have heard Pentecostal Christians, and the noises they make sound very odd. In fact, it almost sounds as though they are just babbling away in gibberish.

God: They speak in languages understood to Me. It is a language of praise and prayer. Their spirits bypass their minds and pour out their joy and thanksgiving, as well as concerns and heartaches, to Me.

Interviewer: But couldn't they just express those things in their own language?

God: They could and do, but praying in tongues propels the spirit of the person praying into the spiritual dimension, setting the spirit free from the fetters of the mind.

Interviewer: Is it that way all the time? Or do they just sometimes pretend?

God: You are a skeptic, aren't you?

Interviewer: I apologize if it seems that way, but I think some people may question the way some work themselves up, or seem to be putting on a show when they are speaking in tongues or doing something else that seems odd. Are they doing this?

God: Well, some do put on at times. But I know who is whom and I gratefully receive the prayers and praise of all those who call on Me in sincerity.

Interviewer: Of other gifts You listed, among them is miracles. Do people who are filled with the Holy Spirit have the power to perform miracles?

God: They have the power because they have the power of God. That doesn't necessarily mean that they will perform miracles on a regular basis, but sometimes they might. It doesn't have to be a big thing to qualify as a miracle, just something that is beyond the power of man to perform at the time. Some people might put these kinds of things down to chance, but if My power has been invoked to perform a certain deed, then the performance of it can be classed as a miracle.

Interviewer: You listed prophecy-predicting future events.

God: Prophecy is not just predicting the future. It is a gift of hearing My voice. I speak to people and they hear My voice or that of Jesus or the Holy Spirit and they pass on what they hear. You could say that prophecy is what this interview is. You asked if anyone was there, and I was! I was waiting to talk with you, and I have allowed you to hear My voice, and as you do, you are recording what you hear. That is prophecy.

Interviewer: So how does one get these gifts of the Holy Spirit?

God: By asking to be filled with the Holy Spirit. As Jesus comes into your life and gives you the gift of salvation when you ask Him to, likewise the Holy Spirit will come in and fill you up with Her gifts when you ask Her to.

Interviewer: Does everyone who receives the Holy Spirit receive all of these gifts?

God: They could, but it works somewhat differently in that the gifts are not necessarily all active. But the Holy Spirit delights to give Her gifts to those who wisely use them.

Interviewer: And She is there giving people all these gifts.

God: She is or She is working, as I do, through the agency of helping spirits and angels.

Interviewer: Why does it take the three of You? It seems that one could do it all, since You are God.

God: It is because there are three of Us.

Interviewer: So there have always been three of You?

God: In your way of conceiving it, yes.

Interviewer: What about in Your way of conceiving it?

God: As much as you would like to, it is impossible for you to conceive things from Our point of view until you cross over here. If all the mysteries were explained to you right now, then there would be none left there for you to investigate.

Interviewer: I wasn't asking to understand them all, but maybe just...

God: You are persistent, but in the end it has to be no for now.

Interviewer: Would it be correct if I inferred that You are like a family? Since You are referred to as the Father and Jesus as the Son, would the Holy Spirit be both Wife and Mother?

God: You could say that.

Interviewer: But I know my Bible and I know that the Holy Spirit is referred to throughout as He. If She is really a "She," then doesn't that impinge on the credibility of the Bible, that this is a flaw?

God: No, it doesn't. In Genesis I am quoted as saying "Let Us make man in Our image. Male and female created we them."⁶ So, it was clearly inferred there-and in other scriptures-that there are both male and female characteristics in the Trinity. You know that I am male and so is Jesus. So that doesn't leave many options as to who is the female part, does it?

Interviewer: But You chose not to make it clear.

God: This is something that I had chosen not to clearly reveal earlier. Divine revelation is not all confined to the Bible. You see, the books of the Bible were written under My guidance. Some was prophetic, but at least some of the authors, especially of the New Testament, did not necessarily realize that they were writing things that would later be regarded as incontrovertible. If they had, they would probably have been so worried they would not have written anything. They were writing to inform and teach.

Interviewer: So they didn't know they were writing for posterity.

God: The fact that later their writings would be placed into the Old or New Testament and become the canon of Christian teaching did not occur to several of them. It did to Me, of course, but I never intended for all revelation and truth to be once and for all confined solely to the Bible. What I say today will not contradict the Bible, but it will amplify parts and speak on contemporary issues the Bible doesn't cover. I planned to keep talking to believers and instructing them, showing them new things. However, when the Bible was "bound," the Church became hidebound. That is why I kept calling out new movements of Christians, but almost all eventually cooled off or were eliminated by jealous rivals.

In these Last Days I am showing more and more truth to people if they choose to believe it.

Interviewer: You mentioned "Last Days." By that do You mean the end of the world?

God: The world is just about due for a great big change. But that is an enormous subject in itself, which I will have to talk about another time. This is the second time this has come up, so if you would like to devote a whole interview to this point sometime soon I am sure your readers would appreciate it.

Interviewer: Yes, that would be very interesting. "The End is near" and all that. Speaking of the end, perhaps this is a good place to finish this particular interview if that is agreeable to You.

God: Yes, it is. Thank you!

Interviewer: I always feel rather odd with You saying thank you to me. You being God and me being just a little ol' mortal, for You to talk to me like this is quite awesome, for want of a better word. And then for You to say thank you on top of it is... Well, I can't really find the words for it.

Thank You for putting up with me and my questioning, which I can't help but think You must find rather wearisome.

God: Not at all. Actually, I like to answer questions.

Interviewer: I am certainly very grateful You do. I must admit I enjoy hearing Your answers.

The End Is Near?

Interview Nine

Interviewer: I think the topic of this session was decided in our previous one.

God: Yes, indeed. Tell Me what you would like to ask about the end of the world.

Interviewer: All right. Here we are in the third millennium since Jesus was on earth. People have been going on about the end of the world for around 2000 years, and probably longer. Yet this old world just keeps plugging along. I think people have gotten a little tired of hearing about the end of the world.

God: Just because they are tired of it doesn't mean it won't happen.

Interviewer: Yes, I agree with You. But I think people picture the stereotypical doomsayer, someone a bit off his rocker, wearing a sandwich board with a big sign on it saying "The End Is Near!" I think people can be excused if they disregard this kind of thing.

God: I agree. But just because there is a kook or two saying this, doesn't mean that what they are saying is not fairly close to the truth.

Interviewer: So You are saying that the end is near?

God: The end of the world as you know it, yes!

Interviewer: Please elaborate on the "as you know it." What is going to happen?

God: Do you want the good news or the bad news?

Interviewer: Well, I am relieved to hear there are both. Perhaps if You just listed it sequentially, it would be best.

God: Very well. There is a lot of detail, but for clarity and simplicity I'll just hit the highlights.

Interviewer: Sounds good.

God: As many would agree, the earth has gotten into pretty bad shape. Its resources, especially water, are being used up at a rate that is not sustainable. So even if things were not heading for a climax according to the timetable that I set up at the beginning, something would have to be done. But because there is global disaster looming not just ecologically, but economically and militarily—a fact acknowledged in many quarters—these factors will help propel humanity into forming a united world government.

Interviewer: Like the United Nations.

God: No. The United Nations is just an organization with representatives from all nations but with little real authority. More or less a glorified debating society. What I am saying is that the nations will come together to form a one-world government that has the power to implement what it decides worldwide.

Interviewer: This sounds a bit far-fetched. Nations are not going to be that ready to surrender their sovereignty.

God: Nations already have. Many surrendered sovereignty over their economies long ago when they had to implement economic plans dictated to them by supranational institutions such as the IMF. Others, such as the nations of Europe, have surrendered parts of their sovereignty in order to form regional unions with other nations. So that bridge has been crossed.

Interviewer: Okay, say they do this. A united world government doesn't sound like a bad idea. At least it could put an end to wars, allow for equal distribution of resources, etc.

God: Don't kid yourself. Most wars in the world today are wars within nations, civil wars, and there is not a nation on earth that doesn't exhibit great disparity between rich and poor. So all that talk about peace and equality being instituted if the nations of the world were united under one government of man is just hot air.

Interviewer: But we'll still get a united world government according to what You just said.

God: Yes, you will.

Interviewer: Every government, even a one-world government, has its head.

God: Exactly, and you know who is going to be at the head of this one?

Interviewer: You?

God: Ha! No, not likely. At least not yet. The world is going to turn the reins of government over to a brilliant man who will command respect and allegiance from all.

Interviewer: A good leader for a change. Sounds like just the ticket.

God: That is what everyone-well, almost everyone-is going to say at first. But this man has a sinister secret. He is known by many names, but the one that is the most well known is "the Antichrist."

Interviewer: That doesn't sound very flattering. Why would he want to call himself the Antichrist?

God: He doesn't. But I have called him that, and the many millions of Christians who are aware of his imminent arrival on the world stage will recognize him for who he is and will so label him.

Interviewer: With a name like the Antichrist, I suppose he must be the antithesis of the real Christ.

God: Exactly! And it doesn't take a lot to conclude that if he is the Antichrist, he must therefore be getting his signals from a very different direction than Jesus did. As Jesus was God in human flesh, so, in parody, the Antichrist will be the Devil in the flesh.

Interviewer: Why would we choose the Devil in the flesh to be our world leader?

God: Because humanity will be both duped and desperate. Most will not recognize him for who he is, but will rather see in him someone with the ability and clout to rescue the world from its desperate situation. He will have already proven his worth by sorting out some very difficult issues and will already be acknowledged as the most astute politician and able problem-solver of the day.

Interviewer: But why will we be that desperate?

God: Because the world's economic and political conditions will be in turmoil. A worldwide economic crash will not just result in economic hard times, but also the disintegration of stable government. The world will be calling out for strong leadership, and in this man they will get it.

Interviewer: But, as You said, Christians will certainly recognize him for what he is.

God: Not all. Not even most at first.

Interviewer: Why is that?

God: Many of them don't expect to be around when he appears on the scene. Because of a misinterpretation of Scripture, they feel they will all be taken out of this world before that, in an event termed "the Rapture."

Interviewer: So do they have this wrong?

God: The Bible talks about Jesus returning in the clouds of the heavens just prior to the Battle of Armageddon. At that moment the Rapture occurs. This is the event when all who have received Jesus in their hearts will be transformed and taken up from this world to join Jesus in the air and thence to Heaven. Although this event is sure to transpire, many have placed its occurrence before the darkest days of the reign of the Antichrist begin. However, the Rapture actually occurs later, shortly before the great battle.

Interviewer: And that is a problem?

God: Yes, because at first these Christians are not going to be so ready to recognize the Antichrist for who he is, given that his appearance on the world stage does not happen according to the schedule of events that they are going by. So, alas, many will conclude that he cannot possibly be the Antichrist, but rather some precursor. They will initially play along with him.

Interviewer: So they end up playing with fire.

God: And they will get burned because of it. Many Christians are looking forward to Jesus' Second Coming. They have a hazy idea of some of the events to come and they realize that certain things must occur in Palestine, or Israel, before His return. One of those events is the building of the Jewish temple on Mount Moriah in Jerusalem. Because this man will so organize things to facilitate this happening, they will give him their support in this. But I have leapt forward with regard to the sequence of events. Let Me backtrack a little.

Interviewer: By all means.

God: As I stated, the Antichrist becomes the leader of the world government. By his initiative, several measures are introduced. One is a comprehensive settlement governing the Middle East, primarily centered on the relationship of the State of Israel with the Palestinians and their Arab neighbors.

Interviewer: Excuse me for interrupting, but hasn't Israel already negotiated agreements with its Arab neighbors, including the Palestinians?

God: Indeed it has, but as you are well aware, those agreements are very tenuous and their implementation is spotty because they are fuzzy in their language and are open to a wide range of interpretation. Frustration with a lack of clear definition as to the terms of these agreements will lead all concerned to demand a comprehensive and definitive agreement with all parties, rather than just the bilateral agreements that are in place today. So a comprehensive agreement, with the Antichrist playing the role of "honest broker" and arbiter, will be negotiated and set in place.

Interviewer: What kind of agreement will this be?

God: This pact will have a seven-year term with the intention of it being reviewed and renegotiated at the end of that period. The pact, among other things, will deal with the issue of Jerusalem, particularly with regards to the coexistence of and access to the shrines and places of worship of the major monotheistic religions: Christianity, Islam, and Judaism. It will therefore earn the label "the Holy Covenant," a name by which it is known in the Bible.

Interviewer: So You're saying that the Antichrist starts off doing this really great thing in order to gain favor with the world, even the Christians? He's certainly going to win a lot of public admiration if he actually succeeds where so many have tried and failed before.

God: That's part of his plan.

Interviewer: But since these events are referred to in the Bible, shouldn't that set alarm bells ringing in the heads of Christians?

God: Many unfortunately don't know the Bible well enough to realize this. But for those who do, these events should and they will try to warn others. But by this time events will be rolling and the program of world government will have gained such momentum that protest will not be brooked.

Interviewer: You mentioned other measures instituted by this world leader. What are these?

God: As most astute observers will notice, even though a majority of people might disagree with a government on many issues, as long as the economy remains good, they will usually put up with what they have. So the world government's number one priority will be the economy. Today, an enormous amount of capital flows electronically throughout the world. Nations no longer decide their fate. This is now in the hands of the international financiers, investors and speculators. Speculation on a nation's currency or a sudden withdrawal of investments can bring that nation to ruin in days. This tactic will be used to lead the global economic collapse I mentioned earlier.

Interviewer: Won't people be ready to toss this Antichrist and his government out then?

God: To the contrary, people will demand that he intervene. To achieve recovery, the world government will bring to its ultimate conclusion the present digital trend in the world's economy.

Interviewer: Electronic commerce.

God: Not just electronic commerce and a total electronic economy! In the new economy it will not be efficient to mint coins or paper currency or use other paper securities. The swiftness with which transactions are made on an institutional level will need to be able to be utilized by the smallest entity in the economy-the individual. In order to do this, everyone will need a unique identity number by which his transactions will be logged. To assure that the number remains unique to that person and can be used by no one else, the number will be encoded in a microchip implant along with other vital statistics and data on the individual and then inserted under the skin in the right hand.

Interviewer: Like the implants now used in pets.

God: Yes, similar to those. This implant will go through many upgrades as further, more sinister uses are found for it. Eventually models will be produced to be inserted in the frontal lobe of the brain. You can only imagine what purposes that will be put to. This is the famous Mark of the Beast, the number 666 being associated with each individual's unique personal identity number. This system will coexist for a while with current financial systems, even cash, but eventually all who wish to buy or sell or transact any business whatsoever will need to convert to this Mark-of-the-Beast system.

Interviewer: Aside from Your obvious inference that this is bad, there seems to me to be lots of advantages to just such a system.

God: If there weren't obvious advantages, people would not buy into it. There are a lot of advantages as far as convenience and ease of purchasing and conducting other financial

transactions, and that is why people will be willing to sacrifice their privacy. But that is the candy coating. The Mark will not just be for financial purposes, but it will be integrated into every aspect of life, so it will be made increasingly difficult to survive without this official registration. Then this world government will curtail personal freedoms in the interest of the "overall well-being of the masses" and will demand complete compliance to its rules and dictates, and eventually even worship of its leader.

Interviewer: So when does this happen?

God: Three and a half years after the signing of the Holy Covenant. The continuing squabbles and even wars between its signatory nations and entities will provide the pretext for the Antichrist, the arbiter, to declare the Covenant void and declare a type of international martial law. At that point, he will proclaim himself free from any constitutional restraints and assume dictatorial power. The Mark of the Beast will be declared mandatory, and anyone not receiving it will be regarded as an outlaw. It is at this point that the period called the Great Tribulation will begin.

Interviewer: Meaning a time of pretty enormous troubles?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: Universal trouble for everyone or just these "outlaws"?

God: It will be a time of trouble for everyone. The Christians by now would have wised up to what is happening, but many of them will be in quite a state of shock. Many people of other religious persuasions will also be in active opposition to the Antichrist, as will libertarians who don't want to have anything to do with his system. Whole nations will rebel, and there will be wars between the armies of the world government and these nations. There will also be an increase in natural disasters and other new and more scary plagues, as some of man's genetic engineering projects go awry and produce mega-insects and other biological freaks. It will be a world in chaos and confusion.

Interviewer: But why let it happen?

God: Man will have achieved his ultimate civilization: a united world government and economy based on his technological wonders. Yet it will lead the world to the brink of ultimate disaster. It is man at his pinnacle, but it will show just what a lousy job he does. It is the ultimate demonstration that, left to his own devices, man will make a terrible mess out of things.

Interviewer: But this isn't man on his own, right? I mean, we end up with the Devil for our leader. No wonder it is such a disaster.

God: Humanity as a whole chooses the Devil to be its leader.

Interviewer: But won't humanity be forced into it?

God: Manipulated, but not forced. Each individual will have a choice, and many will choose not to follow him.

Interviewer: Well, there You go. Not everyone goes down the merry path to destruction, so the world is not all bad.

God: I didn't say the world was all bad. I said that humanity as a whole, when left to their own devices, will make a hash of it. But there are those who will remain in resistance to the Antichrist and his government.

Interviewer: How will they survive if the regime is so totalitarian and the economy so controlled that they can't buy or sell?

God: In some areas the situation will be looser than others. It is a big world, and the Antichrist and his government will have a hard time controlling it all.

Interviewer: Am I right in supposing that Your sympathies are with the rebels?

God: Exactly. I will be helping them and will eventually rescue them.

Interviewer: Why "eventually" and not right away? You mentioned earlier that many Christians don't expect to be in the middle of all of this. Why leave them in it?

God: For the same reasons there are Christians in the world today. Their purpose is to be an example of their faith, to tell others about Jesus and to bring them into My kingdom. During the Great Tribulation, this will be needed more than ever.

Interviewer: But a lot of them aren't exactly samples of their faith now.

God: Unfortunately not, but they really won't have much choice then. They will have to either stand up for what they believe or become part of the Antichrist's system. They will soon find out that the Antichrist won't tolerate them, so they will have to cast their lot in with the rebels.

Interviewer: Okay, we have the Great Tribulation happening. What next? I hope there is a bit of an upswing.

God: The Great Tribulation will last for approximately three and a half years; one thousand two hundred and sixty days, to be precise. Then Jesus will return in the clouds with all the host of Heaven. Everyone will see Him as He circles the globe calling all His people to come to Him. Then will be the great Rapture I spoke of earlier, when all those who have received Jesus into their hearts, dead and alive, will rise to meet Him in the air.

Interviewer: I even have a bit of trouble flying in an airplane, but here You have people flying up to meet Jesus. I hope You do a number on me, otherwise I'm going to have to keep my eyes closed the whole time.

God: Don't worry! You'll find that you will have a new, transformed, superhuman body, similar in style to what you have now, but greatly improved and enhanced and impervious to harm. In these new and eternal bodies, all who believe will rise up into the sky in a mighty wave.

They will then be taken to the centerpiece of Heaven, the Heavenly City, where they will join with all those in Heaven to celebrate this great deliverance and victory in an event known as the Marriage Supper of the Lamb. It will truly be the most wonderful occasion to date held in Heaven. Meanwhile on earth, the troubles will intensify and multiply dramatically. Many will die and still more will wish to die to get away from the horrible plagues and disasters that will be occurring.

Interviewer: What about those who were in the rebel resistance who were not Christians? It hardly sounds fair if they get caught up in all this too.

God: I will protect them during this time. It is during this period that the Antichrist will amass his forces to try to annihilate the main force of the remaining rebels. Battle will be joined on the plain of Megiddo in Israel. This is the famous Battle of Armageddon, a battle so fierce and terrible as to dwarf all other battles in its ferocity and carnage. It is in the midst of this battle that the forces of Heaven, under the leadership of Jesus Himself, will intervene and annihilate the Antichrist and his forces. The Antichrist himself will be captured and cast alive into the very depths of Hell. The Devil also will be imprisoned in his own special jail known as the Bottomless Pit.

Interviewer: Gripping stuff! With those two baddies out of the way, I guess we all go back to Heaven and live happily ever after.

God: We live happily ever after, but not just confined to Heaven.

Interviewer: How so?

God: It is at this point that earth is given over to the personal rule of Jesus and those who follow and love Him. For the next thousand years, it will be run the best way. There will be much to do to restore its damaged environment and to try and turn the world back into the Edenic state that it was in the beginning.

Interviewer: I suppose the cities will need a lot of repair as well, after all that they would have gone through.

God: As a matter of fact, I am not so keen on fixing up the cities—at least the major ones. I think the world is better off without them.

Interviewer: Without them? Where will we live? Uh oh! I sense that the answer is obvious. We are not all going back to the farm, are we, for goodness sake?

God: You don't like the farm?

Interviewer: Farm life is okay once in awhile on a weekend maybe, but living there?

God: Don't get too excited. There will still be urban centers, but they won't be the huge, overcrowded cities of today. They will be smaller, more intimate, more humane, and I assure you much more pleasant to live in. If farm life really isn't your cup of tea, there will be lots of alternatives.

Interviewer: And this lasts for a thousand years.

God: That's right.

Interviewer: So this is the good news You talked about at the beginning?

God: The beginning of it.

Interviewer: There is more?

God: Goodness gracious, yes! A thousand years is a drop in the bucket of eternity. This thousand years of peace and plenty and love and happiness is only the prelude.

Interviewer: I assume things only get better from then on.

God: Yes. There is a minor hiccup at the end of the thousand years, but that is all in the plan.

Interviewer: A hiccup?

God: It's all under control, so don't worry.

Interviewer: But a hiccup? Want to elaborate on this? What happens after the thousand years?

God: Can we save that till next time?

Interviewer: You've left us on a cliffhanger here.

God: Let's just say the best is yet to come.

Interviewer: Okay! Sounds wonderful. Thank You again for a thoroughly absorbing discussion. I look forward to next time.

God: As do I.

Beyond the Hiccup

Interview Ten

Interviewer: You left us with a hiccup last time.

God: (chuckling) So I did.

Interviewer: So my curiosity is aroused. What is the hiccup?

God: Well, after the titanic struggle on earth at the time of the Antichrist, with the good side-Ours-winning, there is the resultant thousand years of peace and goodness. At the end of those thousand years, the Devil is then freed from his prison in the Bottomless Pit and we have somewhat of a reprise of the Battle of Armageddon.

Interviewer: What! We go through all that again? Why does the Devil get released, for goodness sake?

God: For the same reason that I let him hang around in the world today. He provides an alternative, and the people of this new world will once again have the freedom to choose which way they want to go.

Interviewer: So what happens?

God: The Devil and his forces are again defeated, this time permanently. The earth then gets a complete makeover. The surface is burned up and recreated anew, becoming an even better and more splendid world.

Interviewer: So why not do this at the beginning of the thousand years? Seems like we work for all that time, or at least some do, and then it all goes down the tubes.

God: It got as good as it could get under the prevailing conditions. Don't you want to see it improved?

Interviewer: Yes, without question, but why not do it right after the Battle of Armageddon? Why wait till this reprise, as You put it?

God: It once again has to do with the training program for humanity. It is practice for the ultimate home I have for you.

Interviewer: Must be quite a place if we need to practice for a thousand years.

God: You're a bit hung up on that, aren't you?

Interviewer: Well, it doesn't seem to be that logical. I would think a hundred years max would be all we would need to practice. Besides, all those who started off at the beginning would be dead even before a hundred years are up, let alone a thousand. Doesn't seem much point to it if you are still practicing when you die and never get to live out what you learned.

God: Who said you would die?

Interviewer: Common sense dictates that not a lot of people are going to live to be a hundred.

God: In the thousand-year period, things will change so much that people will think that you are still a child when you are a hundred.

Interviewer: Oh boy, that's a big one to swallow. I am talking about normal people here, not the ones with the new super bodies You talked about earlier. Normal people won't be able to live that long, will they?

God: If I work it out so they can, they can.

Interviewer: But the body naturally ages. The rigors of the environment take their toll also.

God: The environment does take a pretty bad beating before Armageddon and there is a lot of fix-up to be done. But all that is going to be taken care of during the thousand-year period, and the environment is going to get back into pretty good shape. Besides, you keep leaving Me and

My power out of the equation. I am going to do a miraculous number on the human body, and it is not going to age like it does now.

Interviewer: So if I have things right, we've got the people who went up in the Rapture with new super bodies, but then we also have the people who survive Armageddon getting a makeover too?

God: That's right. There will be those who survive on earth through Armageddon. Those survivors will not necessarily get a makeover, as you called it, but with a few changes in the environment, the aging process will decelerate markedly. So although the initial survivors will benefit marginally, the real benefactors will be their children and their children's children.

Interviewer: What are all these survivors going to do? It sounds a bit like they all go back to the Stone Age.

God: (chuckles) That's not a very nice way to describe the nearly paradisiacal lifestyle that they will eventually enjoy.

Interviewer: I don't think a lot of people are chomping at the bit to go rural.

God: Too boring?

Interviewer: Yes. I think many will think so.

God: Got a better idea?

Interviewer: Most people go for the urban lifestyle.

God: Millions of people being lonely together? That is a better idea?

Interviewer: Not everyone is lonely. I admit that apparently a lot are, but most have some friends, at least.

God: Man was not designed to be an urban creature. Believe it or not, he was designed with a rural or at least semi-rural lifestyle in mind. Okay, I see the wheels turning in there, and you are going to say that I, knowing the future and all, should have been able to anticipate cities. Of course I did. But I still didn't design man for that. He functions best in a more quiet, peaceful, but regular life. Modern urban stress is a killer that is doing more damage than most people realize.

Interviewer: But You said earlier that the centerpiece of Heaven is a giant city. Isn't this contradictory-that Your idea of Heaven is a city but those on earth need to live as country bumpkins?

God: "City" is not perhaps the best way to describe it, but it comes closest in your understanding. It is huge-almost unimaginably huge. It is in the shape of a pyramid, with a base of nearly six million square kilometers and an apex over 2000 kilometers high. Now I admit some of it might have the appearance of being urban, but there is a lot of parkland and open space in an area that big. And I assure you the lifestyle will be relaxed. Even though much work will still be done there, it takes place at a relaxed pace.

Besides-back to your apparent critique of My plan for earth during those thousand years-I can assure you that people will enjoy life there, or at least most of them will.

Interviewer: Most, but not all?

God: There will be those who will not be satisfied. Just like Adam and Eve were not satisfied with what I had for them in Eden, so some people will not be satisfied in a world that will closely resemble Eden.

Interviewer: You would think we'd learn.

God: You would, wouldn't you? But take heart-those rebels who have problems with it won't cause the whole thing to be ruined for everyone else.

Interviewer: So these are the ones that are involved in the "hiccup"?

God: Yes. When the Devil comes along at the end of the thousand years, they gladly follow him into another rebellion.

Interviewer: What then?

God: Well, I put an end to it pretty quickly.

Interviewer: I guess You sort of run out of patience with the bad guys.

God: You could say that. There is always a limit, and they will have reached it by then.

Interviewer: This brings up an aspect of Your nature that we haven't touched on in these interviews, the lightning-bolts-and-thunder side. There are accounts in the Bible of You causing the earth to open up and swallow the wicked, raining fire and brimstone on cities, even flooding the earth and killing all but a handful. This is all pretty terrifying for us mortals. How are we to reconcile this side of You with the kind and gentle side?

God: If I had sat back and not intervened so harshly, the results would have been far worse. The people involved had caused so much harm and hurt and suffering to others. I have to judge evil, else I would not be just.

Interviewer: This side of You is most evident in the Old Testament. Have You changed over time so that You don't do things so violently now?

God: I have changed My tactics, but My nature remains constant.

Interviewer: Tactics? That almost sounds like You are waging a war.

God: I am. There is a very big and violent war being waged for the hearts and souls of men. But this violence is in the spiritual realm. My battle is with My ancient adversary for the souls of humanity-and that battle is conducted over and within each person.

Interviewer: So You don't do these big cataclysmic things like You did in days past?

God: Man does a pretty good job of that all by himself.

Interviewer: But what about the Battle of Armageddon, or this hiccup, where the Devil starts a war all over again? That's pretty physical, isn't it?

God: Man initiates these conflicts by choosing to follow the Devil in the flesh, in the form of the Antichrist, or by choosing to rebel with the Devil in the hiccup we are talking about. When man has stepped so far out of line as to destroy himself, the planet, and many other people, I must step in to put things back in line. These wars only occur because of the choices of man.

Interviewer: Nevertheless, the big natural disasters such as earthquakes and killer storms, these are not caused by man. People even call them "acts of God."

God: No, not all the time, although the intensity of the storms often has something to do with man's damage to the environment.

Interviewer: Granted. But are these natural disasters Your "judgments" or are they just the natural course of events?

God: They are the course of nature. However, I do take advantage of these events to bring about results that I wish. But you cannot conclude that every disaster is some sort of judgment from Me.

Interviewer: But what about the good people who are killed in these disasters?

God: Those who die in events such as mudslides, hurricanes or earthquakes are often believers who go on to a better Home. Many are poor people who deserve more than the injustices and inequalities of man's world, and so I sometimes take the surprising tack of using disasters to free My children from horrible surroundings, and bring them with their entire families to Heaven. There are many reasons for disasters, many of which will not be known until you arrive in Heaven and go back and look at the entire situation when such a disaster occurred from My vantage point. Also, it is often in times of great peril that I can show My power through miracles of protection. These calamities often provide an opportunity for the noblest attributes of people to come to the fore, in acts of heroism, charity, or kindness. Disasters are bad, but through them good things can come. We have covered this ground before.

Interviewer: Yes, You are right. Back to the events we were talking about before. So there is this battle of the hiccup. What then?

God: You have taken a fancy to the term "hiccup," haven't you?

Interviewer: I admit it. It is different.

God: So after this battle, the earth's surface is completely burned up.

Interviewer: Completely? That sounds drastic.

God: Then the surface is wonderfully remade. It is a New Earth, resplendent in every way, with a new heavenly atmosphere. Every good thing is included, and nothing that can be construed to be bad is in it. Then onto this New Earth will descend the Heavenly City referred to earlier. This is the home and headquarters of Jesus and all those who love Me.

Interviewer: So it is literally Heaven on earth.

God: Precisely!

Interviewer: So what happens to the current Heaven?

God: The walls between the spiritual and material will dissolve. That which has existed in the spiritual will now be seen in the material. So the Heaven that now is will also exist in the material. The Heavenly City is even now in existence, but then it will be both spiritual and material and be situated on earth in all its resplendent glory.

Interviewer: Let's see if I got this right. Right now there are these two realms: one, the physical or material; and the other, the spiritual. At that time there won't be any division between them?

God: That is right. There will be one realm.

Interviewer: But why do You need to keep the material? It seems You live in the spiritual and that You have everything there, so there is not really a need for the physical.

God: The spiritual will not be totally complete until it is joined with the physical. I can see I've got you scratching your head over this one.

Interviewer: Yes, You have. I'd appreciate it if You'd elaborate.

God: In the beginning I divided the spiritual from the material. When all is restored, these two realms will again be joined. The spiritual realm right now is, as you suspect, much more complete than the material, but there are some aspects of it that are still limited. These will be completed when My whole creation-spiritual and material-is melded as one.

Interviewer: Fascinating! May I ask if this uniting of the material and spiritual is just for earth or for the whole universe?

God: It includes the whole universe.

Interviewer: So what is the purpose of all these other stars and planets?

God: That will be revealed in good time, but suffice it to say that they are not just for decoration. Because man right now sees only with physical eyes, he can only see what is there physically. But when he sees both the spiritual and physical as one, then he will understand the purpose for these other celestial bodies.

Interviewer: You have me dying of curiosity here.

God: Well, there have to be some secrets, some mysteries left to be revealed. This is one thing I will use to keep your interest.

Interviewer: Just a hint?

God: I have already shown you a lot.

Interviewer: Well, are there any other mysteries You can let us in on, as a consolation prize?

God: You are persistent!

Interviewer: Why will people want to read all this unless there are some things that really catch their eye, some secret that they are going to find out?

God: There are lots of things that I have already shown you. I think it is best to keep some things under wraps. Leave them wanting more!

Interviewer: You've got me feeling like a kid looking at the presents under a Christmas tree. It isn't fair to tantalize us like this.

God: I assure you that it is very fair. It keeps you wanting to come back to Me for more, and that is the purpose of all of this. It is to make you and all who read this want to have more. I have many more things to show you, and I can and will. But I can also show more to each person who individually inquires of Me, as well.

Interviewer: You are trying to put me out of a job.

God: In a way, yes. It is not that I don't like talking to you, but I want to talk to everyone personally. All can hear My voice if they stop long enough and turn their minds and thoughts toward Me.

It is like the story of the little boy who said he could hear from Me. One of the stalwarts of the local church mocked him, saying, "How can an ignorant boy like you hear from the Almighty?" The little boy replied: "Well, when I hear that voice telling me to be kind and thoughtful and loving toward others, then I know it is God." Just like with that boy, My voice is for anyone who wants to hear from Me. And once you get used to it, then it becomes easier.

Interviewer: Very true.

God: Is this a good spot to end?

Interviewer: Sounds good to me.

It's in the Stars! Or Is It?

Interview Eleven

Interviewer: Here we are again. Thank You for coming.

God: Always a pleasure. Shall we get down to business?

Interviewer: A subject I have been meaning to ask about is astrology-the effect that the planets and stars supposedly have on our personalities and destinies.

God: On personalities, yes, destinies, no.

Interviewer: So there is some truth to it?

God: Yes, that is one of the ways that I designed things, so each person's personality is unique. The planets and stars work like an incredibly complex apparatus in this regard. Their positions in relation to each other are always changing, so that the planet and star chart is almost unique for every person and thus bestows varying personality traits.

Interviewer: But what if we are saddled with a personality we don't particularly like?

God: The design the planets and stars give is just the basic pattern. There are good traits and not-so-good traits to each of the so-called astrological signs, but each person doesn't have to leave it at that. You are given the ability to improve yourself. If you don't like the way you are, you can change. But the influence of the stars is not the only thing to shape your personality. Other factors are genetic and environmental. However, more important than personality is character.

Interviewer: Meaning one's ethical and moral strength.

God: Exactly.

Interviewer: But before, You stated that being ethical or moral has no bearing on getting into Heaven.

God: That is a different issue. I did not mean to make it sound like I was denigrating people who are ethical, or saying that it is not important to be moral. I was talking about salvation, which is a free gift granted to you upon accepting Jesus into your life and heart.

Interviewer: So what is the good of being ethical if it has no bearing on your entry into Heaven?

God: It has a lot to do with your inner well-being and happiness in this life. And standing up for what is right will not go without reward in the life to come. You will not regret it, I can assure you. Getting in the door of Heaven is one thing, but it is certainly shortsighted if that is all you strive for. How well you fare in Heaven will have a great deal to do with how you lived your life on earth.

Interviewer: But Jesus was particularly scathing in His attacks on the Pharisees⁷ of His day. Weren't they ethical and moral?

God: There were some who were righteous, but many were hypocrites who only pretended to be "good" on the outside while inside they were seething with hate and venom, as was borne out by their banding together with their avowed opponents, the Sadducees,⁸ in calling for Jesus' execution. They were far from moral or ethical, but were only self-righteous. Self-righteousness stinks, and it is usually obvious to everyone except the person who has it that it stinks.

Interviewer: Self-righteousness isn't goodness, You are saying.

God: That is correct; don't confuse self-righteousness with ethical and moral strength. Those of truly strong character, even if they may appear weak, will stand up for what is right and good against the odds. The vast majority of people usually seem to end up on the wrong sides of issues, so don't look for people of character in the mob calling for blood. You won't find them there.

Interviewer: Well, we got off on a tangent there, but an interesting one all the same. Getting back to all this astrology stuff, it seems You're implying that the daily horoscope business is not reliable.

God: I do often show signs in the night sky, such as comets, for example, as portents. Even Jesus' birth was heralded by a bright star. But the daily horoscope, such as "you will meet a tall, dark, handsome stranger who will provide you with exciting business possibilities," is guesswork. Sometimes it's clever guesswork, but it has nothing to give it credence except an occasional coincidence.

Interviewer: So the ancient superstition about comets being evil omens has some truth to it?

God: I think all you would have to do is read the supporting evidence to see that momentous things happening around the times major comets are sighted is more than just coincidence. Of course, some like to embellish on events heralded by comets, and it is true that major things happen without comets making an appearance, but I do use comets to get people's attention. Not all ancient beliefs are silly superstition.

Interviewer: This talk of comets and portents of doom reminds me of the prophecies of Nostradamus. From what I have read, most of them seem very obscure, but once in a while he said something outstanding that appears to be an accurate prophecy. Was Nostradamus a prophet?

God: Indeed, he did see the future. I spoke to him through My agents.

Interviewer: Meaning he had some sort of a spirit speaking to him, a spirit guide?

God: Yes. He lived in troubled times when someone with his gifts could very easily have ended up being burned at the stake. So I gave him the wisdom through a helping spirit to put his prophecies into verse and in a mixture of languages so that their meanings were veiled.

Interviewer: So all the wild things he wrote about are going to come true.

God: Much of it has and there is still more that will, but some of it will not happen. He was not right one hundred percent of the time.

Interviewer: How so?

God: Some of what he received he did not understand, so he wrote it down wrong. Also, some prophecies are conditional: If such and such happens, then such and such will follow. If for some reason the first criterion is not met, then the rest will not occur, or at least will not occur exactly as predicted.

Interviewer: So if I understand this right, a prophet can predict that such and such a thing will happen, but then even if it doesn't, he is not necessarily a false prophet.

God: That is so.

Interviewer: But doesn't that throw all the rules out the window regarding who is and who is not a genuine prophet?

God: You are saying that your rules are so strict that if someone misses it on one point, you disregard all his prophecies?

Interviewer: Yes, I suppose I am.

God: Boy, you are tough! It seems that you are holding these people to a far higher standard than you hold anyone else to. If a doctor misdiagnoses one patient, do you then regard him as a charlatan?

Interviewer: No, but this is in a different league, isn't it? Someone who is a prophet is supposed to be getting his instructions from You and therefore isn't supposed to be wrong.

God: They are just humans. They can misunderstand and get things wrong.

Interviewer: But then how do we differentiate between the genuine article and someone who is a fake?

God: By the preponderance of the results. If these prophets are right a good deal of the time, then you can bet on them as being genuine. Their motives are another indicator, whether they are genuinely trying to do good and give messages that are helpful and needed, or whether they are in it for their own aggrandizement or for money or for some other ulterior motive.

Interviewer: Any other ways to tell who are bona fide prophets?

God: Well, to be genuine they would need to acknowledge Me as being the source of their inspiration. Also, there is a bit of haziness in most people's minds on this point, but a prophet is not necessarily someone who makes predictions of the future. Actually a prophet's main job is to give whatever message I am instructing him to. That can sometimes be a prediction of future events, but often not.

Interviewer: But aren't there a lot of cult leaders who acknowledge You and claim they are preaching Your message, but yet seem evil?

God: You've jumped from prophets to cult leaders here. They are not necessarily one and the same. But to answer your questions, one man's religion is another man's cult. Much is made of the cult scare these days, but people would always do well to look a little more circumspectly at what is being served up to them by the media. Remember that Jesus was executed as a cult leader, under trumped-up political charges. The leaders of the predominant religion saw Him as a threat to their position and had Him falsely accused of inciting sedition.

Interviewer: Yet it still seems there are a lot of wackos in cults.

God: There are some pretty strange ideas and some are dangerous, but that doesn't mean that they all are, by any means. However, people fear anything that is strange and new until it is proven, which can take a very long time. What I see in some of these religions is that they have thrown off the shackles of tradition and are seeking Me.

Interviewer: But some have this proclivity to turn suicidal.

God: There have been some evil men who have led their followers astray, with horrible results. Suicide is a terrible tragedy. Moreover, their suicides have taken place in groups, which means that they are particularly publicized. There are many more sad and lonely people in society who commit suicide and they don't get publicized. The professions that have some of the highest rates

of suicide are mental health and law enforcement. You have a greater chance of committing suicide if you belong to one of those groups than you do if you are a cultist.

Interviewer: That's ironic, because members of those two groups are usually the ones sounding the alarm about cults.

God: Let's be fair and acknowledge that their jobs are stressful, but it does go to show that no one should be pointing the finger.

Interviewer: What about religious terrorists?

God: What about them?

Interviewer: Well, by all measures of civilization they seem to be bad. Don't they give You a bad name?

God: My commandments are to love Me and love others. If people's actions are going against those commandments, then they are not obeying Me and cannot claim My sanction for their deeds. But there are those who love to smear Me and discredit those who believe in Me by taking the actions of a few and applying it to the many. Take, for example, the words "Islamic terrorists." That wording has been used so often in the media that now many people immediately equate Islam with terrorist actions, whereas that could not be further from the truth. The true followers of Islam submit themselves to Me in peace, although I cannot blame them for the anger they feel because of the way they are often treated by the West, especially the Western press.

Interviewer: This brings up another subject-religious persecution. It is a phenomenon that has been around for a long time, but, as an example that it is apparently getting worse, I read that more Christians have been killed in this century because of their faith than the rest of history combined.

God: That example demonstrates how humanity is less "civilized" now than ever in many aspects.

Interviewer: Why is there religious persecution?

God: Those in the wrong hate the freedom and happiness of those who live right because it exposes what a sham their own lives are. These misguided ones become agents for the "opposition," who hates the light and truth and will try to destroy it by any and all means.

Interviewer: You are referring to Your opposition here, the Devil.

God: Most definitely, because he is at the root of this kind of persecution.

Interviewer: But often these persecutors profess to be atheists, and so they don't believe in him either.

God: They don't have to believe in him to be the agents of his dirty work.

Interviewer: But on the other hand, there are some seemingly devoutly religious people who instigate this type of thing. Look at the persecutions carried out by the Roman Catholic Church in centuries past.

God: Where did they read that Jesus wanted them to persecute others? He even told His followers to love their enemies.

Interviewer: You explained how evil tries to destroy the truth. Will it?

God: It can persecute it and suppress it, but it will never destroy it. In the end the wrong will be destroyed by the right.

Interviewer: You mean that the right will do to the wrong what the wrong is doing to the right?

God: If by that you are asking if it will employ the same means, no! In the end the wrong will be destroyed by the right, just as darkness is banished by light.

Interviewer: That's rather metaphorical.

God: True, but it is a concept that lends itself to instant understanding.

Interviewer: Indeed! Well, we will all look forward to that day. Thank You again for most graciously submitting Yourself to all these questions.

Mayhem and Mammon

Interview Twelve

Interviewer: I'm back!

God: So am I.

Interviewer: Thank You for coming.

God: You're welcome.

Interviewer: One thing I wonder is how You spare the time for these interviews. It seems that I should have to make an appointment, but I just sit down and ask and then You are here.

God: It is because I am omnipresent, so I am able to be everywhere at once.

Interviewer: So while You are talking to me, You can be attending to everything else that You need to do at the same time?

God: I can.

Interviewer: I find that I need to give my undivided attention to some project in order to do a good job at it.

God: Thank God you're not God.

Interviewer: Ha! Isn't that the understatement of the year!

God: Just to clarify things, though, it is not that I don't give My full attention to things, it is that I am able to give My full attention to as many things as need it all at the same time.

Interviewer: What I would give for that ability. Tell me, do You like being God?

God: If I hadn't wanted to, I would never have taken on the job. It can be pretty thankless at times, but the thanks that I get from those who genuinely appreciate Me makes it worth it.

Interviewer: You say You took on the job. Does that mean there is someone else up there who gave it to You?

God: By this I mean, if I hadn't wanted to, I would never have created humanity. I would never have created a world. I would have just enjoyed being in Heaven with Jesus and the Holy Spirit and the angels. But I wanted to show all creation, all in the spirit world, that We, the Trinity, are all-powerful and that right will always win over wrong, through Our help.

Interviewer: So at a certain point, You created the world and all that was and is in it. What were You doing before that?

God: That will be something for you to find out when you get Here.

Interviewer: You were doing something; You weren't just dormant?

God: (Laughs.) "Dormant" is an interesting word. No, lots was going on.

Interviewer: So before time started here, You were busy in Your dimension doing things?

God: "Dimensions" would be more accurate.

Interviewer: I can only barely conceive of what You mean by that. As far as I understand, we have the dimensions of length, breadth, and depth, and then the more abstract one of time. I suppose in Your spiritual world there must be more dimensions that my mind can't come to grips with. Is that right?

God: Yes. It would be a decided brain strain for you to try to grasp these realities, and from your perspective it is really impossible to begin to understand except in a vaguely conceptual way.

Interviewer: So I shouldn't bother?

God: Why not just look forward to the fact that "all will be revealed" in due time?

Interviewer: You have me feeling like a kid the day before Christmas. Guess I'll just try to be patient. Meanwhile, back to what we were talking about: You were doing things before the creation of the world. Were You sort of experimenting for the big enchilada here, or are we perhaps just a further experiment?

God: You are no experiment. I created you to be My companions and earth is the testing ground, as part of your preparation for this.

Interviewer: A while back You were talking about Jesus' sacrifice and You said it was necessary because there were certain inviolable rules in the spirit realm. Why is it that You are bound to these rules? It would seem that You, being God, would not have to be bound by any rules.

God: There were certain conditions put in place at the beginning. Because I put them in place, I am not able to change them until certain conditions are met. I will use the example of a game. This is not to say that I look at the world and what is happening there as a game, but it is a useful parallel.

In a game or in sports there are rules, and no matter who you are, you cannot change those rules, at least not unilaterally. And so it is with Me. I cannot change the rules because I bound Myself to them when I started all this.

Interviewer: I almost had the impression that the rules had been dictated by an entity even higher than Yourself.

God: No, there is no higher authority.

Interviewer: You have mentioned Your opponent as being Satan. Is he bound by these rules?

God: Of course, though he tries to break them constantly and is also constantly screaming at Me that I have to keep them.

Interviewer: He is really a nasty piece of work, isn't he?

God: Unfortunately.

Interviewer: Was he always like that?

God: He started off all right, but because he had a choice, as all the angels do, in the end he chose to be bad.

Interviewer: And he led a rebellion?

God: Yes, he was pretty persuasive, and in the end a third of the angels went into rebellion with him.

Interviewer: Keeping two out of three is not bad. Any politician on earth winning two-thirds of the vote would call it a landslide.

God: I am not a politician, and it was certainly a discouragement to lose those who fell with him.

Interviewer: Since angels have free choice, are there still some who are choosing Satan over You?

God: The event when one-third of Heaven chose to follow Satan was a one-time thing. None of those who can see the degenerate state that the fallen angels have ended up in wants that to happen to them. My angelic forces see that they are obviously on the winning side. Besides, their loyalty was tested and they passed because they chose to remain loyal. That was a watershed moment, and they are not now tempted to defect.

Interviewer: So who came first, man or the angels?

God: Angels. The rebellion of Satan and his followers happened shortly after I created the physical world. That is why Satan was in the Garden of Eden tempting Adam and Eve. From almost the very beginning of your time, the battle between him and Me for the souls of humanity was on.

Interviewer: Round one went to the Devil?

God: You mean with the fall of Adam and Eve?

Interviewer: Yes.

God: He never won their souls; he just led them to sin. In a way it could be looked on as a victory for him, but it was allowed by Me and all part of the master plan.

Interviewer: Satan and all of his crowd were originally created by You, then?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: So ultimately it would be said that You created evil.

God: I allowed it as an alternative to good. As the old proverb states, light can only be appreciated against a background of darkness.

Interviewer: Do any of the fallen angels want to get back on to the good side?

God: Their minds are now hardened. They want to come out on top, so they exert every effort to win.

Interviewer: But they won't repent?

God: As of now, they have no reason to, because they believe they can still win.

Interviewer: But isn't their outcome already decided-that they will lose? Don't they know this?

God: They refuse to believe it. Otherwise, why would they continue to fight if they knew in the long run they would lose?

Interviewer: I figured it was just bloody-mindedness.

God: No, they are under the delusion that they will win. Because they have rejected the truth, therefore they are doomed to believe a lie.

Interviewer: Including Satan himself?

God: I have allowed him to be aware that I know he will ultimately lose, but he is so hardened through pride that he thinks he can still prevail. Even if he can't, he has settled for second best, and that is to cause mayhem and bring as many others down with him as he can.

Interviewer: That is so bizarre!

God: Is it? Have there not been many tyrants and others throughout your history who have known that they were doomed to destruction and yet pursued their ambitions in war and other ventures, leading many others over the cliff like lemmings?

Interviewer: Why were they like that?

God: Pride! Their pride would not let them back down, and so they sacrificed themselves and as many others as they could in the fires of their own ambitions.

Interviewer: Why are others duped?

God: They basically want to be.

Interviewer: But why?

God: As I explained earlier, having rejected truth, all that is left to believe in is lies. To acknowledge that one has been wrong is one of the hardest things for any being, whether angel or man, to do. And so rather than confess mistakes, the proud go on to their own destruction. Sometimes the basic instinct for self-preservation kicks in and stops them, but not every time.

Interviewer: This brings up another subject-confession.

God: Confessing mistakes and wrongs is a powerful liberation.

Interviewer: Yes, we have an expression, "confession is good for the soul." Some even elevate it to the level of a sacrament. What is it about confession that has such a good effect?

God: Until people confess, they carry the weight of the wrongs they have done. Those wrongs weigh on the spirit of man in a very real way. Once they are confessed and forgiven, the weight is gone.

Interviewer: You have made references to being in a war with Satan, but while on earth, Jesus made several statements to the effect that those that follow Him were to be pacifists.

God: Such as?

Interviewer: Well, He said if they smite you on one cheek to turn the other also. Also, He said that those who take up the sword would perish by the sword.

God: When man takes up the sword it is often for unjust reasons, therefore it is by and large safer that you don't.

Interviewer: Even in defense of home and family?

God: That is taking the idea to an extreme. You have a duty to protect your family.

Interviewer: So why did Jesus say those things?

God: He was saying that if they are smiting you on the cheek, the best thing to do is to turn the other rather than to start a big fight. Those who believe in Jesus are admonished to love and even do good to their enemies. The Christian's weapon is love.

But you only have two cheeks to offer; after that...

Interviewer: So they strike out at number three?

God: Yes, you could say that. But under certain conditions you don't even have to wait for that.

Interviewer: So it is okay to fight in the defense of one's family?

God: Yes, of course. You are justified in using force in this type of situation and in defending the weak from harm. And don't leave Me out of the picture. The bullies of the world have an angry God to answer to. You can bet your life that they are going to be sorry, and for a long time too.

Interviewer: Like the other fella with the horns?

God: He's the worst bully of all.

Interviewer: Are we also participants in the spiritual war You mentioned?

God: Yes, but guns and swords have no place in that war. The spiritual warfare is fought with spiritual weapons. Your prayers augment the power of the guys with the white hats.

Interviewer: So that spiritual war spills over into this physical realm in the form of all these little bullies doing their dirty work?

God: Yes, the Devil and the black hats are out to stop the believers and will try to influence others on earth to persecute them. This is one reason why Jesus said for His followers to live a life that cannot be faulted, so that they can enjoy the protection of the civil law.

Interviewer: You mean the Devil may sic his cohorts on the believers, so the believers need to stay on the right side of the law so they will have the law on their side to help them out of any scrapes with the opposition?

God: Precisely.

Interviewer: But what happens when the law of the land forbids what You are asking believers to do? Those responsible for making sure citizens keep the law are supposed to guarantee religious freedom, but sometimes they are the ones who Christians have trouble with. That has been the case where free worship of You and telling others about You is banned.

God: If a law forbids you from practicing your belief in Me, then it is an unjust law.

Interviewer: But it's still a law. Can it be disregarded in such a case?

God: Yes.

Interviewer: So You are saying that believers can break the law?

God: In this instance, on this issue. When a law forbids belief in Me and expressing that belief, you are not bound to keep that law.

Interviewer: Wow, that is pretty interesting! I have God on record that the law can be broken.

God: I have been pretty specific here, and it is only in this case.

Interviewer: Could there be others?

God: Why do you want to know? Do you want to break the law?

Interviewer: Well, if God says I can...

God: Hold your horses! That is not what I am saying. For your own sake, you'd better keep the law, or else you will find you will be answering to it, and that can be pretty costly for you.

Interviewer: Okay, just kidding! Speaking of fighting and all, should a Christian be in the military?

God: The primary job of a soldier is to fight wars. Why would a Christian want to fight wars?

Interviewer: I don't know. Perhaps it is just a job. Or perhaps someone feels there is a genuine threat to his family and country so he joins up to defend them.

God: Putting the genuine need to defend your family aside, a soldier's job is to be the muscle behind a country's government. The governments of the world are largely just the instruments of vested interests, so why would a Christian want to go off and fight wars for unrighteous governments?

Interviewer: So You are saying no?

God: What is your conclusion?

Interviewer: Well, some of our governments certainly like to invoke Your name and tell people they are fighting for "God and country."

God: I don't recall them asking Me before they brought Me into their fights. Governments and leaders have always proclaimed that I was fighting on their side. That way they dupe the people into thinking that if I am on their side, for sure they are going to win. But I am not interested in governments and countries gaining more land and booty at the expense of others, which is basically what wars have always been fought over. Wars are for economic gain, and seldom has there ever been a righteous war. And some of the so-called religious wars have been the worst.

Interviewer: But getting back to the defense issue, didn't even Saint Augustine⁹ say that war could be just if a war is fought for moral purposes and with moral means? He claimed the two basic just causes¹⁰ of war are self-defense against criminal attack and aiding the victim of such an attack.

God: Self-defense and coming to the aid of the weak is one thing. Yes, for goodness sake do that. But bear in mind that in many cases, who is to say which side is criminal and which side is not? From all I see, there are a lot of criminals on both sides. So why would a Christian want to get himself into the middle of all that?

Interviewer: So as a Christian, what duty do I owe my country's government?

God: You are, as the Bible says, to live as peaceably as possible in your community, giving no offense so that you may not be reproached. Live according to the laws of the land.

Interviewer: So I am to be a good law-abiding citizen.

God: Claiming God said you didn't have to obey the law hasn't been very effective as a legal defense. Besides, I told you to live according to the laws of the land.

Interviewer: Jesus was executed as a criminal.

God: He was unjustly and falsely accused and sentenced by a kangaroo court.

Interviewer: But even in today's legal system the common belief is that it doesn't matter if you're guilty or innocent. What matters is how good your lawyer is.

God: But you should avoid even ending up in court.

Interviewer: Well, a lot of Your people have ended up in court, and have gotten the raw end of "justice."

God: That is true. If a Christian is dragged into court on trumped-up charges, that is another thing. But if he is guilty of real criminal offense, then he has to pay the price. The laws of the land are there for your protection. If you follow them, you can claim the law's protection. If you don't, then you are on shaky ground.

Interviewer: What about taxes? Should I pay taxes to the government?

God: If you owe taxes, yes.

Interviewer: Even if it is one of these unrighteous governments that You were talking about?

God: If you want to avoid unnecessary trouble, pay your taxes.

Interviewer: Should a Christian be involved in law enforcement?

God: Those involved in police work, maintaining peace and order, are indirectly My instruments. I am grateful for their work, and because of their work those who believe in Me, along with the rest of the general populace, can live in safety. The Devil and his ilk love to try to commit all sorts of evil, and the police are My agents to prevent that from happening. However, I am speaking in general terms, and not every action by a policeman can be regarded as fulfilling My will. Some are malicious and corrupt.

Interviewer: So it comes down to individuals and their actions.

God: Precisely.

Interviewer: What about secular work in general?

God: What about it?

Interviewer: Should a Christian hold a secular job or should he rather be involved in some sort of religious vocation?

God: The primary job of all Christians is to share My love with others.

Interviewer: But not all can be preachers or missionaries, if that is what You are saying. Some just might not feel that they can do it, or they may have obligations that prevent them. I could do some sort of work for You and still hold down a secular job, right?

God: Yes, you can. What I mean by saying a Christian's primary job is to share My love with others is that this should be more important to him than his secular job. I know that many cannot work for Me full time for a myriad of reasons, but there are those who can and there is a very big need for them to do so. For those who can't, I encourage them to do what they can. Some cannot do much, but they do all they can. This is laudable, and I will reward each one according to how he spends his life, how he uses the talents I have given him.

Interviewer: So if someone gives more of his or her life to You, as You say, he or she will get a greater reward?

God: It is not necessarily how much one gives but rather how much one gives in proportion to what he or she is able. That is why you need to honestly assess your priorities in life. If your secular job is number one, then you have to be honest and say that is what you are serving and not Me.

Interviewer: The old choice between God and mammon.

God: Exactly. You can't serve two masters, and it is difficult at times to reconcile your priorities. However, being an example of love is the most important thing, no matter what kind of job you have. There have been and still are a lot of people who can preach a good sermon, but words by themselves are hollow. And by an example I certainly don't mean being a goody two-shoes. I mean someone who is enjoyable to be around, someone who is kind and thoughtful, someone who will go the extra mile for others, someone who is there for others when they need him or her.

Interviewer: Back to the issue of God and mammon. One has to have money to survive, right? If I don't work, then I get no money.

God: If you work for Me, I will make sure you are okay.

Interviewer: So You are going to write out a check?

God: It could come to that, but working for Me has the best job security of any job on earth.

Interviewer: How so?

God: Guaranteed lifetime employment and a super retirement plan.

Interviewer: Retirement plan? Oh, I get it.

God: (Chuckles.)

Interviewer: But that still won't put food on the table now.

God: How can you say that? I do put food on the table for all those who give their lives to My service.

Interviewer: That takes faith.

God: Is that so hard to have?

Interviewer: For many of us, yes.

God: You have faith in stoplights, don't you?

Interviewer: Stoplights?

God: Yes, those little red, green, and yellow lights.

Interviewer: What has that got to do with it?

God: If you can believe that a little red light is going to stop that tractor-trailer coming along the crossroad from barreling into the side of your vehicle when you drive out into the intersection, why is it so hard to have faith in God?

Interviewer: But I can see the stoplight. It is visible to me. You, unfortunately, are not.

God: Granted, you can't see Me. But are you saying you have more faith in a light bulb than you have in Me?

Interviewer: Sounds pathetic, doesn't it?

God: You said it.

Interviewer: So if I work for You, You will supply what I need?

God: That's the truth of it.

Interviewer: Well, that's food for thought!

God: Hope so! And I assure you it will also put food on the table.

Interviewer: Thank You very much for coming. It is always a pleasure to hear Your views on these issues.

God: Thank you for giving me the opportunity.

Interviewer: Until next time.

God: Good-bye.

Virtue and Vice, Naughty Yet Nice

Interview Thirteen

Interviewer: Hello!

God: How are you? Been thinking?

Interviewer: Yes, I have. And as You can see, I'm here for another session.

God: Great! Shall we start?

Interviewer: You are very eager today.

God: I am always eager. When someone is ready to start listening to Me, I like to take advantage of it right away, because often he or she tires pretty quickly and I get left talking to Myself.

Interviewer: Must be very frustrating.

God: Extremely! It is a good thing I have patience.

Interviewer: I suppose that all the things we regard as virtues, such as patience, are part of Your nature.

God: At least all the ones that should be regarded as virtues.

Interviewer: And conversely do all the vices belong to the ugly fella?

God: You are going to really tee him off talking about him like that. So go for it! You are right in that he is the master of vice.

Interviewer: Did he come made with those vices originally or did he think them up all by himself?

God: Those vices are the opposites of the virtues. He saw the good and came up with the bad.

Interviewer: And then saddled us with those?

God: No, you have a choice! You choose whichever you want to yield to, whether virtue or vice. Human nature tends to gravitate toward the bad; it takes more effort to embrace the good. But people often do want to be good, so that gets them to see the need for Me, and having Jesus and the Holy Spirit in their lives. With Our power in them, the good is much more easily achieved.

Interviewer: So then we can all be goody-goodies, I imagine.

God: Good grief, man, goody-goodies are just selfrighteous. Letting Our power work through you won't make you a goody-goody, but Our power will help you achieve good.

Interviewer: That is a bit confusing for me. What exactly is the difference?

God: Putting on a show of goodness and achieving good are two different things. If you are trying to achieve good for your fellow man, then oftentimes you may not look so good to some. Others may not like what you are doing, may misinterpret your actions, or may feel you are going too far, etc. Looking good is being concerned about yourself and how you appear to others-perfecting yourself, actually, or being in love with yourself. But doing good is being a help to others, being concerned about their needs and condition, and putting yourself at the bottom of the totem pole.

Interviewer: So what is the greatest virtue?

God: Why, love, of course. Because if you love others, that will motivate you to help them in every way, and it will supply you with the will and resources to practice all the other virtues such as patience, kindness, honesty, and so on.

Interviewer: And the greatest vice?

God: Self-righteousness.

Interviewer: I thought You would say hate.

God: The self-righteous "moral" man has wreaked untold damage on the world. Those who have been the greatest scourges of this century thought they were right and righteous. Hitler, Stalin, Mao, and others were so convinced of their rightness that they had no compunction in dispensing terror and bloodshed to achieve their "right" ends. And their confident self-righteousness convinced the masses that the horror they were perpetrating was for the greater good.

Self-righteousness causes man to think he is good without Me. Thus he has no need for Me, and he ends up straying far from Me. I have named some of the obvious culprits and there are many more that should spring to your mind, but if I named them, that could hit close to home and knock down some of your icons.

Interviewer: So I won't pursue it. Somehow when the terms "virtue" and "vice" are mentioned, one subject that springs to mind is sex.

God: Why do you think that is?

Interviewer: Because they have become synonymous. When we say a woman is protecting her virtue, it means she is keeping her chastity. When one thinks of vice, you think of strip joints, hookers, or even a wild time with your girlfriend or spouse.

God: But sex is not a vice.

Interviewer: I think in many people's minds it is naughty, yet nice.

God: Sex is supposed to be fun. So having a wild time, or a "naughty" time as you inferred, with your spouse should be looked on as getting pretty close to as good as it gets on earth.

Interviewer: Earlier You made some rather radical statements about sex, saying You don't have to be married to enjoy it.

God: The world has made such an issue out of sex. Sex is supposed to be a wonderful part of marriage, really one of the most fun parts, but it doesn't only have to be between husbands and wives. It shouldn't be engaged in frivolously, and people need to be conscious that their actions don't hurt others. But if it helps someone, hurts no one, and is not illegal, then there is no harm in it. In fact, there is a lot of good in it.

Interviewer: But there are consequences.

God: You mean children?

Interviewer: Yes, but not only children. I mean, sex can kill these days.

God: You mean AIDS and other diseases?

Interviewer: Yes.

God: That is why you shouldn't have casual sex. There needs to be quite a bit of forethought by both parties.

Interviewer: So shouldn't they wait till they are married?

God: Perhaps some should, but it is not essential. If you are going to have some sexual incompatibility, it would be good to know and get that sorted out before you get married, wouldn't it?

Interviewer: Speaking of incompatibility, is it okay to get divorced?

God: My goodness, we were just talking about premarital sex and now you've jumped all the way to divorce. Don't you want to dwell on the marriage for a while before ending it?

Interviewer: I mention this because You were saying that it is better to work out the incompatibility kinks before marriage. I was wondering about people finding out, once they are married, that things are not going so well. Do You consider divorce an option?

God: If you really try and it doesn't work, rather than spending your lives in misery with each other, it is permissible to divorce, but this should be a last resort. Every effort should be made to save the marriage, and if children have been born to the marriage, then the parents should put the happiness and well-being of the kids before their own. If the home is like hell when the couple is together, then even for the kids' sake it might be better to separate. But the parents should certainly be able to manage a level of decorum and civility even if they dislike each other, if it means their children can get the benefit of having two parents.

Interviewer: There are many single-parent households nowadays.

God: And this is a very sad state of affairs, because children are made to need two parents, both a mother and a father.

Interviewer: In a previous interview, You said that the key to relationships is humility.

God: Yes, and it is the key to a successful marriage too.

Interviewer: But in a marriage, which at least usually starts out as a romance, isn't love the key?

God: If you truly love the other, then you will be humble. By "humble," I mean that you will regard the other partner as more important than yourself. If both of the partners are doing that, then it is guaranteed to be a successful marriage.

Interviewer: Would it also mean that they should regard their children's happiness as more important than their own?

God: Yes!

Interviewer: But won't that result in the kids turning out to be spoiled brats?

God: I agreed when you said "more important." I didn't say to spoil them.

Interviewer: So what is the difference?

God: If you cater to their every whim and don't instruct and train the children, but rather let them boss you around, then you will spoil them. But regarding them as more important is making sure that they are cared for and receive the training and guidance they need.

Interviewer: But many of us have careers we are pursuing and can't devote that much time to our children.

God: When you have children, being a parent is the most important career you have. If your children suffer because you are pursuing your own goals to their neglect, you will live to regret it. The most important legacy anyone can leave behind is his or her children. Put your children above your own ambitions and you generally won't go wrong. You won't spend your old age lonely and regretting your selfishness. Even if your children are not able to be with you or care for you, your memory will still be rich with the multitude of marvelous times you spent together with them.

Interviewer: But many of us feel that we have to keep our job and its dictates in order to maintain a reasonable standard of living.

God: I think you would be surprised what you can do without and still maintain a reasonable standard of living. As the Bible states, "Beware of covetousness, for one's life does not consist in the abundance of the things he possesses."

Interviewer: I don't think most people are really being greedy, or covetous, as You put it.

God: That is something that they will honestly have to assess for themselves.

Interviewer: Most of us are just trying to keep up the payments.

God: That is where all this "keeping up with the Joneses" has led. The things in your life now own you rather than you owning them. It's best to stop and really consider whether you need all those things. Sometimes you are better off just cutting your losses and simplifying your lifestyle.

Interviewer: That is a frightening prospect.

God: Humanity's essential physical needs are quite minimal—food, clothing, and shelter. Why waste your time on things you don't really need and which aren't making you happy? Life is too precious not to be enjoyed.

Interviewer: So You really want us to enjoy life.

God: Definitely! I want you to enjoy every moment of it, living life to the full—one full of love, loving Me, and loving others.

Interviewer: That sounds like a fitting way to finish this book. Would You like to say anything more?

God: Even though this is to be the end of your book, I hope this is not the end of our discussions and conversations, neither with you nor your readers. We have discussed and debated many topics, but there is still much more we can talk about. Whenever you want to, please stop by. I am more than happy to talk with you or any and everyone on any and every topic. Remember, you can call on Me at any time! I am right there with each of you—just a breath away. I love you!

Afterword

God: So what do you think?

Interviewer: What do I think? I am not sure what You are getting at.

God: So what do you think of Me after all of this? Am I what you imagined I would be?

Interviewer: Well, yes and no. I mean, I thought You were mighty and smart and all beforehand. I even thought You were pretty nice to put up with a lot of us, but I honestly have to say that You are a helluva, excuse me, heavenuva of a lot better than I imagined.

God: Thanks for changing helluva to heavenuva.

Interviewer: You're welcome.

God: I really care, you know. Whoops, well, I guess it's catching. Even God's saying "you know" these days. But it is only the first time in the book, isn't it?

Interviewer: I think so.

God: But anyway, I do care a whole lot about each and every one of you there. I want to be close to you all. Earth languages don't do justice to the feelings of love, tenderness, compassion, understanding, and everything else I feel for you. I hope people will understand that I am not the way many people imagine. I don't like the big stick caricature and I am certainly not off somewhere having a vacation or sleeping. I like to be involved with people. I made everyone to have the opportunity to spend eternity with Me in the most wonderful place there ever was. I need you all and I love it when you realize you need Me. I long to help each of you if you will give Me the chance and the time.

Interviewer: Do You take orders?

God: Orders?

Interviewer: I mean like orders for things people would like when they get there?

God: So what's on your mind?

Interviewer: I've been drawing up a list in my idle moments and I'd really like a woodsy type of setting for a nice bungalow and...

God: Just a minute, would you? Secretary!

Secretary: Be there in a jiffy!

God: Bring your notepad. There's another list coming in.

Interviewer: Well, as I was saying, I really like evergreens and a lake setting and...

The End (Or is it just the Beginning?)

Notes

1 The Gospel of John recounts Jesus turning over 100 gallons of water into fine wine at a wedding feast in the Galilean town of Cana.

2 Saint Paul (3?-62? A.D.) was the foremost Christian evangelist, theologian, and organizer of the early Christians. Originally named Saul, he was a Jew born in Tarsus, a key city of southeast Asia Minor (now Turkey), located near the Mediterranean coast, and was at first a persecutor of the early Christians. He also was a Roman citizen. A Pharisee, he trained under Gamaliel, one of the most learned rabbis of his time. Saul was present at the stoning to death of the first Christian martyr, Stephen, and then worked directly for the Jewish high priest with the intent of eradicating the early Christians. Traveling from Jerusalem to Damascus, Syria, with a mandate from the Jewish authorities to arrest Jews there who professed to be Christians, Saul was blinded by an intense supernatural light and fell from his horse. Out of the light a voice spoke to Saul, saying, "Saul, Saul, why do you persecute Me?" Saul inquired who it was that was speaking and the reply was that it was Jesus of Nazareth. Saul's companions saw the phenomenon but did not hear the voice. They took Saul to Damascus where he lay blind for three days until a Christian, Ananias of Damascus-acting on a vision-came and prayed for him, and Saul's sight was restored. It was at this point that Saul converted to Christianity, although he did not begin his famous missionary journeys or begin using the Latin form of his name, Paul, till fourteen years later. Paul died a martyr in Rome, after spreading Christianity throughout much of the then Roman empire and writing most of the epistles of the New Testament.

3 Grace vs. Law: Although the concept of grace-favor or kindness received without being merited or warranted-was apparent in Old Testament times, it was Saint Paul who first taught that it superseded the laws of the Old Testament. Paul argued at length in his epistles that God gives salvation as a free gift that cannot be earned, since no one is good enough to obtain it. He taught

that you can't work your way to Heaven by dutifully keeping laws or regulations, but only through accepting that you cannot save yourself and are therefore in need of a Savior.

4 According to the fifth book of the New Testament, The Acts of the Apostles (chapter 1, verse 3), Jesus appeared to hundreds of His followers after His resurrection, being seen for 40 days before ascending into the heavens, while being watched by many of His disciples.

5 Temptation in the Wilderness: At the beginning of Jesus' ministry, right after being baptized by John the Baptist, Jesus spent 40 days in the wilderness praying and fasting. It is recorded that at this time He faced three great temptations from Satan, each one greater than the next. The last was when Satan took Jesus to a high mountain and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world with all their riches and glory. Then Satan said, "All these things I will give You if You will fall down and worship me." Apparently, these were in his power to give. If they weren't, and he was only bluffing, Jesus, who would have been well aware of the validity or falsity of this statement, would not have been in the least tempted, thereby invalidating the whole test.

6 Genesis chapter 1, verse 26.

7 The Pharisees (meaning separated ones) were a religious and political party in Judea at the time of Jesus. They elevated the "traditions of the elders"-the body of oral and written commentary which interpreted the Law of Moses-almost to the same level as the Law of Moses (the Pentateuch, the first five books of the Old Testament). They were strict legalists who insisted that every aspect of the Jewish religion be observed in the most minute detail, in particular the parts on tithing and ritual purity. This put them on a collision course with Jesus and His followers, who preached that love was paramount, and thus the slavish keeping of the Mosaic Law was no longer necessary. Although some Pharisees were favorable toward Jesus (among them, Nicodemus), most were openly antagonistic and jealous of Him. These often confronted and disputed with Him, and even plotted and attempted to kill Him on several occasions. It is ironic that the majority of the Pharisees-who were ardent believers in the Jewish God and the Old Testament, whose prophets foretold of and identified the promised Messiah-rejected this Messiah when He came, and were complicit in His execution.

8 The Sadducees were the dominant political and religious group in Judea during the time of Jesus. The chief priests and many of the leading aristocrats and merchants were Sadducees. They were in opposition to the Pharisees and rejected the "traditions of the elders." It was the Chief Priest and other Sadducees who organized the arrest of Jesus and demanded His execution by the Roman authorities.

9 Augustine, Saint (354-430 A.D.), one of the most eminent Western Doctors of the Church. He converted to Christianity while visiting Italy and then returned to his home in North Africa. He later became bishop of the seaport of Hippo, modern-day Annaba on the Algerian coast. He wrote many treatises and theological works, the most well known of which are *Confessions* and *The City of God*. He died in Hippo in 430 A.D. while the city was being besieged by the Germanic Vandals.

10 Just War Theory: St. Augustine of Hippo was the first major Christian theologian to address the task of determining the conditions under which war is legitimate. Augustine stated for a war to be just, it must be fought for the right reasons, and it must be waged under rightful authority. The only reason which justified war was the desire for peace. "Peace is not sought in order to provide war, but war is waged in order to attain peace." As for just cause, he said, "A just war is wont to be described as one that avenges wrongs, when a nation or state has to be punished, for refusing to make amends for the wrongs inflicted by its subjects, or to restore what it has seized unjustly" (St. Augustine of Hippo, "Against Faustus the Manichaeon," XXII.73-79, in *Augustine: Political Writings*, p.222 [Michael W. Tkacz and Douglas Kries, trans, Ernest L. Fortin and Douglas Kries, eds. 1994]).

St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) argued that a war is justified when three conditions are met: 1) the war was prosecuted by a lawful authority with the power to wage war, 2) the war was undertaken with just cause, and 3) the war was undertaken with the right intention, that is, "to achieve some good or to avoid some evil." Augustine's and Aquinas's arguments form the basic core of just war theory (Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, Part II, Question 40, Art. 1).

Back cover:

Interviews with the Infinite

What does God think about what's going on down here these days? Why did He make the planet in the first place? How does He feel about romance, love and sex? What does He think of the environment, the death penalty, euthanasia and other important social issues? What's Heaven like, and-perhaps of more concern to some of us-is there a Hell and how bad is it? And what does God do for fun?

God answers these and a host of other questions you've always wanted to ask Him in this absorbing collection of casual and candid interviews. What He has to say might surprise you!

About the author.

Born in 1952, Scott McGregor is an expatriate New Zealander and world traveler. At age 20, Scott had a deeply moving and spiritually transforming experience that has guided his life and career ever since.

Scott has also written two historical novels, *The Perfect Ones* and *The Saga of Cormac*, but says his work on God on God has been his favorite endeavor to date. "God is such an awesome character," Scott explains. "He is caring, clever, understanding, humorous, compassionate, thoughtful, and everything positive ad infinitum. People have many mistaken ideas about Him, and He is very hurt by that. He also has plenty to say-some of it quite unexpected, but all of it fascinating."

(End of file.)