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### God's Silence

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One of the most enigmatic questions is God's silence when atrocities occur and human beings cry for help. The issue has been addressed in terms of the compatibility of all-powerful, loving God and the existence of evil. In theology, this problem is known as theodicy. If God is omnipotent, good, and all-loving, why and how does He leave evil and human misery without intervention? Why doesn't He eradicate evil and turn the world into a better place? Is He involved in human affairs? If so, how? If not, why?

This essay explores how Unificationism answers this question, in three steps. First, I will examine the question and frame the inquiry. The question is complex, and there are multiple ways to formulate the question. By presenting how the question is framed, I will limit the scope of my inquiry. Second, I will articulate the Unificationist perspective on the biblical narrative of the Fall, which is considered as the origin of evil. The inquiry into how and why God did or did not intervene in the Fall outlines a paradigmatic principle in exploring the more general question of God's involvement in human affairs. Third, I will apply the findings in the Fall to the general question of God's silence: why and how God responds or does not respond.

I will conclude by remarking that God's silence cannot be fully answerable within the framework of the Fall. The Unificationist account of the Fall explains why God does not intervene the Fall, but it does not fully explain how He is involved in human affairs. The account of the Fall answers the limit of His involvement, but does not explain whether He is involved or not, and if He is, how. This conclusion leads to a new set of questions and the inquiry into human history.

### The Enigma of God's Silence

The silence of God is a difficult question. It is taken up not only by theologians but also by various literary figures. For example, Shusaku Endo, a contemporary Japanese Christian novelist, entitled his historical novel "*Silence*" (*Chinmoku*),<sup>[1]</sup> referring to God's silence in response to a Jesuit priest's plea for help during the persecution of Christians in seventeenth-century feudal Japan. Under a Confucian government, Christians and their relatives were killed unless they renounced their faith. The Jesuit priest, the main character, was no exception. The fiction depicts the priest's dramatic plea for God to break His silence.

Elie Wiesel, a Nobel peace prize winning writer and a holocaust survivor, wrote a play and a book entitled *The Trial of God*,<sup>[2]</sup> based upon his experience of a mock trial in Auschwitz. Wiesel was called to the back of shack in Auschwitz and found three rabbis holding a rabbinical trial in which they indicted God. The indictment accused God of allowing His children to be mass murdered in spite of His promises to the Jews. The three rabbis unanimously found God guilty of the charges.

The question of God's silence is also brought up through the framework of personal experiences. Harold Kushner, a Jewish rabbi, had a son, Aaron, who when he was three years old was diagnosed with progeria, "rapid aging." It is a rare genetic disorder found in one of three million, and those who are born with progeria live to their mid-teens or early twenties at most. Kushner's son died "two days after his fourteenth birthday."<sup>[3]</sup> Kushner published his reflection as *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* in 1981. In the book, he recounts the explanations and advice of his "friends," with reference to the Book of Job in the Hebrew Bible. Kushner runs

through the various theological reasons offered for the illness of his son, including “punishment” for “sin,” God’s lesson, God’s plan for a greater good, and others, but finds none of them acceptable. Thus he illustrates the depth of the enigma concerning God’s silence in one’s personal life.

Our initial task, then, is how to frame the inquiry into God’s silence. As a philosopher, I will frame the question as: does God intervene in human affairs, and if He does, why and how? In this regard, I will explore the Unificationist perspective on the reasons why God stays silent.

If there is a reason as to why and how God intervenes in human affairs, then we can have a better, if not complete, understanding about what we can and cannot expect from God. If we ask God and expect something He does not provide, the way we ask the question itself is wrong. From the notion of God’s omnipotence and omniscience, we may be expecting things God does not or cannot give us.

This inquiry begins with the Human Fall, the first narrative that illustrates the question of God’s silence. In particular, why did God not stop the Fall? In the next section, I will explore this narrative and the Unificationist interpretation of this narrative.

## Unificationist Interpretation of the Biblical Narrative of the Human Fall

In Unificationism, the narrative of the Fall in Genesis 3:1-14 of the Hebrew Bible is a story of the origin of evil. It is a puzzling narrative. How did the archangel Lucifer, who was God’s good creation, turn into Satan? Why did the first ancestors, Adam and Eve, who were likewise God’s good creations, fall? How could the Fall happen in an ideal environment called the Garden of Eden? How didn’t God intervene and stop the Fall? There are at least three puzzling questions, regarding the environment, human nature, and God’s involvement.

When we consider the problems of evil in our life, we usually ascribe the causal factor to two elements: the environment and/or human nature. Neither of them seems to be an issue for Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden. Adam and Eve, brand new beings in God’s creation, were without any stains of evil, and they lived in an evil-free environment. What else do we need or expect from a circumstance for good to flourish? If evil originated from this condition, what good can we expect to come from any situation we encounter in the history of humankind?

The third issue is God’s involvement. This issue raises at least two questions. First, God’s involvement at the time of the Human Fall raises the question of God’s omniscience. If God knew that there was a chance that human beings might fall, why and how did He design the Garden of Eden as such? The second question is, why didn’t He intervene to stop the Fall?

Whatever one construes the biblical passages of the Fall, it is a powerful narrative which poses a number of questions. Phillip Zimbardo, for example, a Stanford professor of social psychology, published *The Lucifer Effect* (2007), in which he gives a reflective account of the notorious Stanford Prison Experiment he conducted in 1971.<sup>[4]</sup> In a mock prison at the psychology department at Stanford University, he witnessed the rapid transformation of good, mentally healthy, intelligent college students into abusive ones in a matter of days. His question in the experiment was why and how, and he identified a certain kind of environmental force as the determining factor for the transformation. Zimbardo, however, was deeply puzzled by the narrative of the Fall at the Garden of Eden. By referring to the transformation of Lucifer to Satan in the Foreword of his book, he notes the magnitude of this narrative, in contrast any other transformation of good to evil:

That is the most extreme arc of transformation imaginable, and so sets the context for my investigations into lesser human transformations of good, ordinary people, not angels, into perpetrators of evil in response to the corrosive influence of powerful situational forces.<sup>[5]</sup>

As a social psychologist, Zimbardo did not delve deep into the details of such theological discussions. Nevertheless, the narrative is puzzling to anyone who tackles the question of evil.

Why is this narrative so critical? As I noted, in the Garden of Eden human beings were not tainted with evil and the environment was evil-free. All the evils in human history can be traced back to previous problems in history whether they are legitimate or not, because what we have today is seen as a continuation of the past and problems can be traced back to the past to a certain degree. In the theological interpretation of evil as sin, for example, all sins are traced back to the original sin, committed in the beginning. The Fall in the Garden of Eden is, however, the very beginning. Furthermore, the narrative indicates that God and Lucifer are the only beings there with Adam and Eve.

The question of God's involvement or intervention is all the more pressing, since He is the one who seemed to have the knowledge and capability to prevent the Fall. How does Unificationism account for this question?

## Why Did God Not Intervene in the Fall?

Why did God not intervene in the Human Fall? *Exposition of the Divine Principle* lists three reasons in chapter two, "The Human Fall," section six, "The Reasons God Did Not Intervene in the Fall of the First Human Ancestors." They are, first, "to maintain the absoluteness and perfection of the Principle of Creation," second, "that God alone be the Creator," and third, "to make human beings the lords of creation."<sup>[6]</sup>

The first argument gives a meta-philosophical reason. It explains not the substantial contents of the reasons why God was not involved in the Fall, but how God applies the laws and principles He set out. It is the rule of how the principles are applied. "To maintain the absoluteness and perfection of the Principle of Creation" means that God does not act against or in violation of the principles He established. Thus, this first reason explains God's attitude or stance toward the principles He created. In other words, it is the confirmation that God follows the Principle.<sup>[7]</sup> In the same section, there is an explanation about the contents of the Principle which God abides by, which is explained in the third reason: "to make the human beings the lords of creation."

The second argument is similar to the reasoning behind Augustine's view of evil as the "privation of good."<sup>[8]</sup> Augustine defined evil as an absence or privation of good, since all beings, as God's creations, must be good. If all beings come from God, evil cannot be a being or cannot have any existential status. God cannot admit or accept or recognize the evil as a being.

The background of Augustine's argument is a Neo-Platonist identification of "being" with the "good," which conversely identifies evil as a privation of being, or non-being. In the *Enneads*, Plotinus defines "evil" as Non-being:

There remains, only, if Evil exist at all, that it be situate in the realm of Non-Being, that it be some mode, as it were, of the Non-Being, that it have its seat in something in touch with Non-Being or to a certain degree communicate in Non-Being.<sup>[9]</sup>

The second reason in *Exposition of the Divine Principle* basically follows the same reasoning. God cannot and does not endorse evil, and thus cannot and does not intervene in evil acts:

God does not regulate any unprincipled existence which He did not create, such as hell; nor does He interfere with any unprincipled act, such as criminal acts. If f God were to affect the course of such beings or acts, then they would necessarily be given the value of God's creations and be recognized as principled.<sup>[10]</sup>

God does not acknowledge any evil in order to avoid giving existential status to it, so He did not intervene in the Fall.

What, then, does this Unificationist account imply in real life? It implies that God may not directly intervene in evil. This, however, poses a question. If, for example, a conscientious person was enticed into a morally bad life or environment, does God not intervene at all, just as He did not intervene the Fall? Conversely, from the evil-doer's point of view, once he or she has vicious motive and takes evil actions throughout, does he or she shut out God's hand entirely? Is being vicious in effect a creating a shield to protect one from God? From an evil-doer's perspective, does it make his or her evil work much easier? God's non-intervention seems to imply that it may "benefit" an evil-doer to do evil. Thus, this point raises more questions than answers.

This point also implies that God will not punish evil. The standard assumption of the idea of divine justice is that God rewards morally good actions and God punishes bad actions. The link between moral good or evil and their consequences is God's judgment. If God, however, turns His face away or take His hands off of evil in order to avoid giving it existential acknowledgement, then evil actions become easier, since they are immune from God's intervention.

This implies two points. First, God's intervention or involvement may be "mediated." Thus, God's non-intervention in evil can conversely mean His intervention to do good. God can be involved in good actions, and His work may require that good people deal with evil. Second, it raises the question of the ontological status of the principle of divine justice. Is there such a principle as "divine justice" and what is the nature of this principle? Is it a quasi-natural principle independently working in the universe without God's intervention? Is divine justice a prescriptive norm built into human reasoning alone? If it is a normative principle of reasoning alone, evil can persist unless human beings eradicate it. Does God intervene to make justice work? These are still open questions.[\[11\]](#)

The third argument, "to make human beings the lords of creation," explains in substance why God did not intervene in the Fall. In the Unificationist account, Adam and Eve were to become co-creators by completing the last stage of Creation, and this required that they perfect themselves. In order to earn the "qualification to rule the universe" to make them "worthy to govern all things," human beings must perfect themselves without God's help. It argues that it was human responsibility to mature and grow without God's help:

Only by perfecting themselves in accordance with the Principle can they earn the qualifications to rule the universe. If God were to rule directly and control the lives of human beings who are of a ruler to those who are unqualified to rule. That is, it would have the effect of granting this authority to those who have not yet fulfilled their responsibility or earned God's creatorship.[\[12\]](#)

In the Unificationist account, God does not act in violation of the principles He established. The principle required God to refrain from intervening in the process of maturation that human beings are responsible for.

This account raises the question of God's omniscience, and whether God anticipated the probability of Adam and Eve not achieving perfection according to the principles He set out. Furthermore, it raises the question of God's responsibility. In the Divine Principle, no responsibility is ascribed to Lucifer, since as an archangel he was a part of "all things." Among God, Adam and Eve, and Lucifer, only Adam and Eve are said to be responsible for the Fall. Yet Adam and Eve are said to be immature, still growing toward perfection. This leads to the question: why and how are immature individuals fully and solely responsible for the Fall? Doesn't God have supervisory responsibility? Then there is the question of indeterminacy. Did God miscalculate the chance that immature human beings might make a mistake? Did He create the world with an element of sheer indeterminacy or where nothing is predictable? The Unificationist account still leaves open these questions of God's perfection, God's foreknowledge, God's responsibility, and the freedom and determinacy of the creation.

According to the biblical narrative of the Fall, God gave the commandment of "you shall not eat the fruit of the knowledge of good and evil." In the Unificationist interpretation, "eating the fruit" in this context means having a sexual relationship. The commandment is that Adam and

Eve not have sexual relationship before they reach maturity.<sup>[13]</sup> As far as the biblical narrative goes, this is the only apparent commandment God gave to human beings, indicating that there was some indirect involvement by God in human affairs. How then, is God involved in human affairs indirectly?

## How Is God Involved in Human Affairs?

### *Autonomy, integrity, and God's commandment*

In the section three of chapter two, “The Human Fall,” entitled “The Power of Love, the Power of the Principle and God’s Commandment,” the Divine Principle explains why God gave a commandment of “you shall not eat” to Adam and Eve. In 3.2, “Why God Set Up the Commandment as an Object of Faith,” it makes three points: God knew the possibility of the Fall, so He gave the commandment to prevent the Fall; the challenge of Adam and Eve was the issue of love; God gave the chance for Adam and Eve to inherit His creative nature and thereby experience the joy of subjugating the Archangel.

It was not only to prevent their fall that God gave immature human beings the commandment. God also wanted them to enjoy dominion over the natural world—including the angels—by inheriting His creative nature.<sup>[14]</sup>

One critical point is the nature of the commandment. It is the prescriptive instruction concerning love relationships. In 3.1, “The Power of Love and the Power of the Principle in the Human Fall,” the Divine Principle explains the supremacy of the power of love over that of the principle. During the process of growth to the stage of perfection, the way God intervenes in human affairs is not by exercising control but by emotional feeling. In Chapter 1, section 3, “The Purpose of Creation,” 3.2 “Good Object Partners for the Joy of God,” the Divine Principle explains why and how perfected individuals cannot commit sins: God neither commands nor controls human beings; perfected individuals cannot commit sins because they share God’s feelings and “experience the Heart of God as if it were their own”:

Sharing all the feelings of God as their own, they would never commit any sinful acts that would cause God grief. This means they would never fall.<sup>[15]</sup>

Sharing the Heart of God is the way God relates with perfected individuals. In the growing period, according the Divine Principle, the instruction to avoid love relationships during their immature stage was the only commandment God gave to Adam and Eve. For all other matters, human beings were given creator-level autonomy and integrity. Adam and Eve were expected to exercise and cultivate their full potential and capability in dealing with all challenges and issues.

Thus, the key principle is the moral integrity and autonomy of human beings. This principle seems to set the limit of what and how God is involved in human affairs. Why does moral autonomy matter so much? Consider the first reason why God did not intervene. God regulates His own Self by observing the principles He set. Self-regulation is nothing but autonomy. God expected Adam and Eve to become morally autonomous, just as He is. In the Unificationist account, God did not intervene in the Fall for this reason: as God is autonomous, human beings should be autonomous. Because God is an autonomous, self-regulating being, He expected Adam and Eve to become equally autonomous and equally in control of themselves.

Love is neither a command nor an order. It is nurturing, encouraging and caring. Loving does not violate the moral autonomy and integrity of human beings. As I discussed, the stage of individual perfection is characterized by “sharing all the feelings of God.” Reasoning, analyzing, and making judgments are all left to human beings. What kind of world human beings create, how they manage and how they live, all are left in the hands of human beings. In the Unificationist account, God seems to be involved in human affairs in the form of love, at least in the context of His original creation.

## *Dynamic concept of “perfection” with trial-and-error*

The narrative of the Human Fall raises another element to consider, which is the question of the world's determinacy or indeterminacy. I speculate that God created the world with an element of indeterminacy, or chance. Just as human beings have freedom, the world itself may have an element of indeterminacy. Things can turn out good or bad. Accidents, mistakes, illness, and all kinds of things can happen. It seems to me that God created the world as a place of challenge-and-response, with an element of chance and indeterminacy. Human beings are tasked to respond to challenges. They can cultivate creativity and become co-creators by responding to various challenges. The outcome has, however, an element of chance, with varying degrees of probability. For the world to be creative and free, trial and error is also to be expected.

One problem is our concept of “perfection.” The concept of perfection is often construed as the complete absence of trial-and-error, and mistakes. As far as my reading of the Principle is concerned, it is far from the truth. Perfection basically means moral perfection, the absence of atrocities and radical evil. Quarrels, mistakes and accidents all happen, as far as they are free from evil. In the Unificationist reading of the narrative of the Garden of Eden, God created Adam and Eve as beings with all the capacities of co-creators, set them up in the realm of challenge-and-response, and gave them the commandment of “you shall not eat.” Among the possible perfect worlds, the world of the Garden of Eden is a world of trial and error. It is neither a rigidly controlled environment nor a deterministic, law-governed, mechanistic world. It is a creative environment where human beings can fully try, experiment, and make mistakes. I tend to think that semi-random happenings in nature, including earthquakes, tsunamis and hurricanes, are all part of a natural mechanism, which has no intrinsic element of “evil.”<sup>[16]</sup> No matter how difficult they may be, they are a part of the challenge that human beings are expected to cope with.

In intellectual history, thinkers who presented the utopian society tended to speculate that it would be a controlled world. Thomas More's *Utopia*, which he modeled on Plato's *Republic*, is a highly controlled egalitarian society. From work to marriage, all aspects of life are regulated and determined by communal rules.<sup>[17]</sup> Along with Tommaso Campanella's *The City of Sun* and Robert Owen's *New Harmony*, which he attempted to establish in Indiana in 1825, they all embody an image of the ideal world as a rule-governed, highly controlled communal society. The last attempt at this was communism by Marx and Engels. These utopian works of literature may have affected our image of the “perfect world” as an efficient, highly regulated, egalitarian society. This is contrary to what I read in the Unificationist account of the Garden of Eden.

If I use Kant's characterization, human beings as portrayed by utopian literature are “heteronomous” rather than “autonomous.” Autonomy is the ability or capacity of a human being to regulate the self by imposing moral laws upon the self. Heteronomy is the state of governance by other forces or authorities external to the self. Moral autonomy is the foundation of freedom and responsibility. Human beings, for Kant, are distinguished from other beings by their moral autonomy. Things in nature do not regulate themselves but are regulated by laws given to them.

In my reading of the Divine Principle, God created the Garden of Eden as a place where Adam and Eve could freely try, experiment, and explore things. I argue that “perfection” thus should be construed as moral perfection in the sense of the absence of radical evil amid conditions where love can flourish. Arguments, quarrels and disputes are a part of trial-and-error, competition and experimental exploration. The joy of creativity is possible only through free exploration and the exercise of creative efforts that include mistakes and errors. The Garden of Eden portrayed by the Unificationist interpretation seems to be a world of challenge-and-response. The only commandment God imposed on that world was “you shall not eat.” Other than this critical regulatory commandment, God did not interfere with any decisions and actions that Adam and Eve chose to do. God even took the risk of giving them the choice of whether to keep the commandment. Then, even after they failed, God did not intervene in order not to violate moral autonomy and integrity of Adam and Eve, and His own autonomy.

## A Note on God's Involvement in Human History

## *The progression of God's involvement in human history: from heteronomy to autonomy*

So far we examined the Unificationist interpretation of the biblical narrative of the Fall. However we also find numerous cases of God's commandments, covenants, and other involvement in the biblical history. In those cases, does God intervene in human affairs in such a way to violate the autonomy and integrity of human beings? What is the Unificationist account of this matter? I want to briefly comment on this point without giving a detailed analysis.

In Unification Thought, history is characterized in three ways: "sinful history," "history of recreation" and "history of restoration."<sup>[18]</sup> Thus, it argues that two types of laws are operative: "laws of creation" and "laws of restoration."<sup>[19]</sup> Furthermore, the Divine Principle presents five schemas for categorizing the "history of restoration." Among them the fifth schema, "the ages categorized with reference to responsibility," is most pertinent to the current question of God's involvement to human affairs.<sup>[20]</sup>

According to each schema for categorizing history, history is divided into three 2,000-year periods: from Adam to Abraham, from Abraham to Jesus, and from Jesus to the Second Coming. In this fifth schema, the responsibility of the "providential history" shifted progressively from the God in the first preparatory stage, to "Jesus and Holy Spirit," and then to the "people of faith" who follow the Second Coming.

According to this schema, the narratives of God's conversations with the Israelites in the Hebrew Bible are examples of the period of the "age of the providence based on God's responsibility." From the time of Jesus to the time of the Second Coming, "Jesus and the Holy Spirit have shouldered the second responsibility to defeat Satan as they work to restore fallen people."<sup>[21]</sup>

Although the validity of these schemas has to be examined elsewhere, God's progressive involvement in human history seems to be consistent with the limit of God's interference with human affairs. Unificationism views human history as progressing from the stage where human beings are "lower" than "all things," the things of nature, to stages of greater maturity. This progression parallels God's involvement in human affairs, from a more controlling, heteronomous relationship to one that respects human autonomy and integrity.

From a Unificationist perspective, one may also argue that the entirety of history has been guided by God's "providence," and this is how God is involved in human affairs. From this perspective, the history section of *Exposition of the Divine Principle*<sup>[22]</sup> can be seen as showing how the laws of history apply to human affairs.

An inquiry into the laws of history will have to address two basic questions. First, it must clarify the nature and status of "laws" of history. History is a highly interpretive discipline. From deciding "facts" to the prioritization of events and arranging their relations, interpretation is involved at all levels. Even the adoption of "causal" relations is highly interpretive. Behind the Unificationist view of history, what hermeneutic principle or ideas control? What is meant by "laws" when Unification Thought discusses "laws of re-creation" and "laws of restoration"? Do they carry any sense of "causal" relations? If so, what does "causation" mean?

Second, this inquiry will have to examine what are the guiding principles to prioritize the applicable "laws." Each real event can be analyzed in multiple layers. When one applies "laws," what guiding principle or principles should one adopt in choosing the applicable "laws," prioritizing them, and applying them to the case? Without guidelines or case examples, the application of "laws" to real cases is difficult.

Both questions point to the need to explore hermeneutics. Without clarifying the guiding principles concerning how to apply "laws" and the nature of these "laws," one can hardly see how the Principle is applied to real cases. How to apply laws may not be another rule-following work but a complex interpretive work. In current Unificationist literature, such work on hermeneutics is yet to be developed.

*How to approach God's silence in history?*

How can we approach the question of God's involvement in real cases? In the introduction of this article, I presented three sample cases: the persecution of Christians in feudal Japan, the Holocaust, and the plight of a parent who has a child with an incurable illness. How can we decode the enigma of God's silence in these real life situations? How does Unificationism answer the question of God's apparent non-involvement in these situations?

In order to answer this question, we must consider it at two levels: first, at the pre-social, historical level we analyzed it in the context of the Fall; second, at a social, historical level we must address it in contexts after the Fall. For the former, two conclusions can be drawn, a negative formulation and a positive one. In my analysis of the Unificationist account of the Fall, I pointed out that God does not intervene in the human affairs to the extent that He would violate the moral integrity and autonomy of human beings, just as He does not violate His own autonomy. This is a negative formulation. On the positive side, the goal of human growth, in Unificationist account, is the state in which human beings can co-share God's love in heart. There is a process of growth whereby human beings can become the embodiments of God's love. But this requires that God not intervene in the realm of heart.

God can only share His love and heart with human beings to the extent they are open to it. God gives encouragement, support and nurture to human beings in any circumstances. Rabbi Kushner, whom I cited at the beginning of the essay, found that among his friends, the kind of friend who was most valuable was the friend who could just be with him without telling him any theological or psychological "explanation" of why bad things happened to him. That friend was not like Job's "friends" in the Hebrew Bible who were constantly propounding reasons. He just loved. Although "the pain and the anguish and the sense of unfairness will still be there,"<sup>[23]</sup> Kushner ultimately found God in his attitude of love toward all surrounding his dying son.

In Unificationist account, clarification of God's silence demands that we explore God's relations with human beings in socio-historical contexts. Ever since the Fall the descendants of Adam and Eve have expanded scope of human affairs exponentially to ever broader socio-historical levels. According to Unificationism, God guided the history of "restoration" and "re-creation" through certain principles and laws. Accordingly, we must examine these "laws" and principles in order to answer the question of God's involvement to human life. In other words, the post-Fall sphere is a socio-historical world, in contrast to the world where the Fall took place which is a pre-socio-historical world.

The question of God's silence, of how God is involved in human affairs, is thus unanswerable within a framework of speculative theology alone. We are led in our inquiry to the analysis of Unificationist theory of history. As I noted earlier, how to read a Unificationist theory of history is far from obvious. For example, emphasis on "laws" of history and retrospective accounts of the past tend to give a "deterministic" interpretation. If, however, the world is built with an element of indeterminacy, the Unificationist theory of history should be examined in a non-deterministic way. It may suggest the existence of indeterminate elements of chance in social, historical phenomena, thereby giving us a different understanding about the relationship between God and human beings. The same Unificationist theory can appear differently according to the hermeneutic perspective one takes toward the theory. The real task is the analysis of the hermeneutic framework by which we interpret the Unificationist account and its principles.

## Conclusion: A Hermeneutic Task

The enigma of God's silence in the face of atrocities and human cries for help is one of the most critical questions in theology and philosophy. Countless thinkers tackled the question and gave various answers. Nevertheless, no definitive answer has been given, in spite of its importance and numerous attempts. This essay is an attempt to clarify some of the Unificationist account in this area.

As an initial step, I analyzed the Unificationist reading of the biblical account of the Human Fall. This reading yields two conclusions. First, God can be involved in human affairs to the extent He does not violate the moral autonomy and integrity of human beings as well as His own. Second, God can be involved in human life through love.



The question, however, turns out to demand further exploration of God's involvement to human history. An exposition of a Unificationist account of a theory of history, however, requires a hermeneutical perspective that can guide our interpretation of the Principle. In order to decode the enigma of God's silence, we may have to devise a new hermeneutic strategy to read the Principle itself.

Unificationism presupposes events in biblical narratives including the story of the Fall as "real." The claim of "realism" is probably neither verifiable nor falsifiable with evidence. If those "events" are not literally "real," but denote archetypal symbolic "truths," how does it affect the entire argument of the Principle? To what extent does the validity of the Principle rely on the realist assumption? I tend to think that, if we see the whole Creation-Fall-Restoration schema of the Principle as one hermeneutic narrative, we can evaluate the validity of the Principle without raising the question of "reality" claim. The burden of demonstrating its validity lies on how it can effectively contribute to solving critical questions and issues.

## Notes

[1] Shūsaku Endō, *Silence* (New York: Taplinger, 1979).

[2] Elie Wiesel, *The Trial of God (as It Was Held on February 25, 1649, in Shamgorod): A Play in Three Acts* (New York: Random House, 1979). A BBC TV program was also released in 2008. See Jemma Rodgers et. al., *God on Trial* (Boston: WGBH Boston Video, 2009).

[3] Harold S. Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen to Good People* (New York: Schocken Books, 1981), p. 8.

[4] Philip G. Zimbardo, *The Lucifer Effect: Understanding How Good People Turn Evil* (New York: Random House, 2007).

[5] *Ibid.*, p. vii.

[6] *Exposition of the Divine Principle* (New York: Holy Spirit Association for the Unification of World Christianity, 1996), pp. 76-78.

[7] It should be noted that this first argument explains a Unificationist answer to the Euthyphro dilemma presented by Plato in *Euthyphro* (see 10a). The question is whether the gods will something because it is good or whatever the gods will is good. The Unificationist position is the former. God observes the Principle He created. If one takes this position, one carries the burden of explaining what the principles are that make right, right and good, good.

[8] See "What is Called Evil in the Universe is But the Absence of Good," in Augustine, *On the Holy Trinity*, Philip Schaff, ed., *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers of the Christian Church* (Eerdmans, 1978), p. 491. <http://www.ccel.org/ccel/schaff/npnf103.pdf> Accessed on April 10, 2014.

[9] Plotinus, *The Six Enneads*, trans. Stephen Mackenna and B. S. Page (Chicago: Encyclopædia Britannica, 1955), p. 40. <http://www.aren.org/prison/documents/religion/Religion/The%20Six%20Enneads.pdf> Accessed April 10, 2014.

[10] *Exposition*, p. 77.

[11] The principle of justice is, in my reading of the Principle, a balancing mechanism of give-and-receive action. Be it retributive, distributive, restorative or otherwise, justice is based on the principle of harmony. In social and human spheres, this principle seems to require voluntary human actions in order to make it work. Interpreting divine justice as a quasi-natural principle seems to be a misinterpretation based upon a category mistake. We tend to interpret "principles" based upon the paradigms of natural science. The principle of justice should be construed not as a mechanical, causal relationship but as a normative principle which requires human action and interpretation.

[12] *Exposition*, p. 78.

[13] Ibid., pp. 58-61.

[14] Ibid., p. 67.

[15] Ibid., p. 34.

[16] Natural disasters are generally conceptualized as “natural evil.” I contest this conceptualization. Natural phenomena have no intrinsic element of “evil.” Where, when, and how we live and construct habitats are naturally affected by the nature. The idea that God controls nature and uses it to punish humans is superstition. I use “evil” in a more restrictive sense limited to human actions.

[17] In Thomas More’s *Utopia*, all wake up at 4:00 AM by the bell, study from 4:00 AM till 9:00 AM, and work three hours in the morning, three hours in the afternoon, and go to bed at 8:00 PM. Clothing must be humble, replaceable every two to seven years. No luxury items are permitted, nor is private property or money. Meals are shared communally. See Thomas More, *Utopia*, edited by Paul Turner (London: Penguin Books, 1965).

[18] Sun Hun Lee, *New Essentials of Unification Thought: Head-Wing Thought* (Tokyo: Unification Thought Institute-Japan, 2005), pp. 364-67.

[19] Ibid.

[20] *Exposition*, p. 186.

[21] Ibid.

[22] *Exposition*, 175-379.

[23] Kushner, *When Bad Things Happen*, p. 161.