

CHAPTER TWO
THE ETHICAL COMBINATIONS OF THE OLD STORY OF LUCIFER

**“He wanted to be like God in an
inappropriate way in that he wished to
obtain something through his own will,
not subjecting it to God’s.”
Jeffrey Russell quoting Anselm**

All the major ethical questions and concepts are enfolded in the Lucifer myths. I will look at the most important ones using the key given by those myths, and show how the myths can actually give a more realistic representation of ethics than many current philosophic and spiritual theories (1). This chapter is a synopsis of the remainder of the book and is organized into nine basic questions that an ethical system needs to answer. Most are not the typical questions found in modern ethics texts, but they closely follow the primal events of the Lucifer texts. They are the components of the Lucifer system of understanding good and evil.

I also begin an argument that continues my critical look at postmodernism in bioethics. The Lucifer texts have something important to say about this current politicizing of ethics and the trend toward a static Total Society. If he was anything, Lucifer was not political. In the old texts, it is the celestial ruler who is the embodiment of postmodern, centralized and static control. It is the ruler of the heavenly court who supports the arguments of Thrasymachus against Socrates, that justice or good is the will and interest of the one in power. It is the seraph Lucifer who, by his action, affirms Socrates in defining ethics as more than power, more than following orders or commands. Lucifer might call it equal respect. Iblis might call it true love of God. Azazel might call it love of human descendants. Satanael might call it honor and integrity. Enki might call it *me*. Logos might call it remembrance. It is value, not power.

Question 1. In my most recent bioethics book (2) I developed a systems bioethics that was limited to a humanistic level of ethics, using the phrase “It’s a wise species that knows what its self-interest is” to express such a centering of ethics in human beings. I was reluctant to take bioethics into the cosmos, even having some misgivings about

Kant's willingness to include all rational beings (from whatever star system) in bioethics (3). But I did leave the question open in the last pages, considering that extraterrestrials might share sufficient organism-nature with human-nature to make such a bioethics possible. I understood that without expanding bioethics to cosmic dimensions, it was partly relative, relative to the human species and its interaction and understanding of its natural environment. That would be a sufficient ethical theory for the present, but my misgivings for the future were real. One of the components of human nature is to search and find new experiences. The probability of a new experience that involved reasoning life-forms from other star systems is not so low that philosophers should remain unconcerned about the inadequacy of ethical theories to deal with the event of a contact (4). Ethics needs to be forward looking as well as analytic, so that its concepts can encompass future probabilities. Kant in the eighteenth century attempted to construct an ethical theory that would be capable of handling such a major event in human experience, and we should be at least as proactive as he was. Such an event (with some reasonable probability of its occurring despite cultural reluctance to accept it) would be significant. A systems bioethics that could theoretically deal with such an impact would play an important role. We would feel the need for it. So ethics does need to ask, seeing in Lucifer, Samael, Iblis, the Archon, Sophia, nonhuman sentient beings: What is the domain or range of ethics? Kant refused to restrict ethics to one specific class of sentient beings. And if our ethical system includes other beings within the cosmos, can and must it be based on a cosmos that is not neutral, but ethical? Is there such an ethical system to be discovered in the nature of reality itself, or doesn't it make any sense to talk about a cosmological ethics? My early answer was that it didn't.

In my seminars, the students and I construct a continuum of possible membership in the ethical community. Depending on the answer to that membership question, the range or domain of ethics will be narrow or expansive into the cosmos. We identify the concepts such as potentiality, viability, rationality, history, and genetic programming which include or exclude entities from membership. Most students are open to the inclusion of other entities than human beings into membership, and philosophers have even extended moral standing to trees and ecosystems. But there are significant problems raised in such an extension, even though current environmentalism and animal rights

movements pass over such difficulties. It is not established that the human observer can or should actually identify the interests of other species apart from our human standpoint, and my first paper on ethics dealt with that problem (5). The destruction of red mangrove stands in Florida had been described as an “ecocatastrophe,” and the isopod responsible for it (*Sphaeroma terebrans* Bate) described as the unethical aggressor disturbing the balance of nature by dining on the mangrove’s buttress roots and felling the trees into a briney death.. But the mangroves could just as easily be seen as intruding into the territory of the marine world and damaging that watery habitat, invading the sea. Only human interests seemed capable of providing a basis for ethical judgments on whether more sea or more land was the ethical goal. We could not put ourselves in the place of either the mangrove tree or the isopod eating its roots. We did not appear to have access to an impartial, omniscient observer, a philosopher’s imaginary perfect observer (6). Lacking such required knowledge, it seems unlikely that human beings could sufficiently represent another species’ interests in making ethical choices or even analyses.

The greater problem, though, would be how to adjudicate between competing interests within a system, when all entities’ interests would need to be given equal standing. Do the moral rights of trees count equally with the human need for shelter? To conceive of human beings as all-benevolent and neutral observers who will make decisions based on some overarching ethical rules that are ungrounded and not benefitting our species’ needs was the puzzle that kept me from concluding that even a “kingdom of rational beings” could be a basis for ethics. I limited the domain of ethics to the human interest domain, and I restricted membership in the ethical community to human beings, with all the interesting definitional problems that still contained. But Kant’s extraterrestrial beings, if they shared our system of reason and sufficient common nature, could not be so easily rationally excluded. They would be as ethical as we, as the Lucifer texts show, and, having knowledge of good and evil, also having a claim to membership. I had to leave the question open.

Their ethics would be derived (not deduced) from their nature, as ours is from our nature, and if there were enough similarities, the two ethical systems could be combined. Even more than ethics being a combination of similar natures, it would be possible to look for characteristics (patterns) of the known universe with which both beings

interacted, and to extend the domain of ethics from our planetary system to the cosmic system. Adequate knowledge of the cosmos and its laws or patterns (what the old Sumerian texts called *me*), the nature of the beings, and the relationships to the cosmos would ground a naturalistic ethical theory, without the need for an omniscient, omnipotent, and neutral perfect observer of philosophy (which after all is just another way of assuming a god). Once there is sufficient description of a pattern on multiple levels of a system, the pattern can be extended as a probable hypothesis to the entire system, a warranted posit. This had been the ancient classic program for an ethical theory, but it sank in the stagnation of a closed, static cosmos. Much was lost when Gnostic ideas of dynamic and infinitely-changing and expanding systems (such as those found in the buried-treasure codices of the Nag Hammadi Library) were banished from Western theisms.

That raised another ethical issue. If the interaction between a component of the cosmos and the rest of the cosmic system could ground an ethical theory, was there something inherently ethical in the cosmic system? Was ethics a natural feature of the cosmos, and was the cosmos then not as neutral or purposeless as scientists and nontheists tended to assume in the twentieth century? If Edward O. Wilson's project for consilience is correct, and I think it is, then not only can we do a scientific reduction of ethics to lower levels of organization or scale, but we can trace in a synthesis the slow evolution of ethics from those lower levels. (7). If we can do both, and Wilson points out that the first is much easier than the second, then the reality we are describing in those reductive and synthetic functions is an ethical system as part of the system's nature. This would answer one of Wilson's unusual conclusions, that some mysticism and religious character are needed to fully develop or explain the humanity of our being. As sentient beings, we connect with something in the cosmos, much like our visual system connects with light waves to produce images and colors, to produce ethical evaluations. What we connect with is as basic and essential to ethics as light waves are to sight. The cosmos might exist in such a way that ethics will be generated, and it may not, then, be nonsense to talk about cosmic ethics.

A scientific argument for extending ethics to its full scope within the limitless cosmic system has been developed in Stephen Wolfram's *A New Kind of Science*. (8) Wolfram

presents empirical data for a probable theory of reason and ethics as integral to this cosmic system, based on his work on universal automata (systems for calculating/thinking found in nature with some frequency). Wolfram argues all universal automata, computational programs that could be run in a natural system, are computationally equivalent (any of them, from the Van Allen Radiation Belt to the human brain) can perform equally to all of them), and if this is true, it fills the cosmos with cognitive values. Cognitive values and moral values are not different in kind, and the cosmos is permeated with values as part of its basic nature. For a naturalist, the cosmos becomes the base of values (the true *and* the good).

Lucifer, as the first being to interact with the cosmic system and move it to new developments, illustrates this cosmic domain of ethics. As a rational being, he moves philosophy and ethics to consider extending membership in an ethical community to those beings who can interact in such a way with the cosmos, who have the potential to interact in such a way, who have the nature that makes such interactions logically possible, or who have had a history or are a memory of such interactions. Lucifer/Enki nourishes the development of his human creation, and tries to cut the best deal he can with the assembly of gods for them (9). Lucifer also moves the interaction from blind obedience and acceptance to free development and potential: from the dark, senseless, unknowing suffering of what is to the light, sensing, aware action with what is and may be. He is the symbol for discovery of all aspects of the cosmos, an infinite and eternal project if systems theory is accurate and we look at the Big Bang of our perceived universe as only a small part of the multilevels of the cosmos. He is the being who can function in the void or chaos, as Enki who conquers and rules the Kur/Chaos or as Lucifer the Seraph exiled to the void and acting within it.

Question 2. I've talked about determining membership in the ethical community as a difficult argument which can either arbitrarily narrow membership or unworkably extend membership, neither of which is feasible in the real world. The human species is not alone in arriving at a learning program as its evolutionary strategy, and we can trace the development of such learning programs in less and less complex organisms. That is one of the major problems for membership criteria, since such criteria construct a continuum that makes it difficult but necessary to assign a point where consideration of membership

ends and rejection of membership begins. Since dynamic systems are interconnected and all limiting lines tentative, there is a complex answer to the basic question: What entities are included in membership in the ethical community? Does ethics require a certain level of rational/learning development, and where is that line?

Potentiality is a useful standard for placing that point, but alone it leads to acorns being collected to make oak cabinets, animals having equal ethical rights with humans, DNA bestowing moral standing, RNA extending such standing, the planetary system having moral standing, galaxies and super-galaxies crowding membership -- and an unworkable concept (10). Viability is a useful standard to limit potentiality, but viability also depends on stating the initial conditions (thanatophoric dwarfism is lethal at birth while Huntington's disease may not be lethal for 50 years), and is not so easy to determine. It also leads to the conundrum that none of us, given a long enough time-scale perception are viable. We are all mortal, or the nonsentient objects are caught up in entropy amounting to the same. Viability will have to be defined very carefully when used as a standard for membership.

History is a third standard to deal with the complexity of membership. If an entity has had membership, that confers a history on that entity, and that history is potent enough to demand continuing membership. Lucifer, for example, with the history of an angel, is always an angel no matter how fallen. He cannot be stripped of his nature, only his beauty and light. A man, with the history of a human being, is always a human being no matter how demented or dying. When an entity has the worth and responsibility of a member of the ethical community, that entity does not give up worth as part of its historical nature. Worth, in the natural law tradition, was seen as inalienable, and there are good philosophic reasons still current to maintain worth as inalienable. What is the relationship between worth, respect, and justice? The Lucifer texts are actually a very sophisticated expression of those ethical relationships if we see the Lucifer being as having inalienable worth and owed the respect due all sentient beings.

Memory is also a standard, because sentient beings hold others like them in their minds, even past death. All of cultural history indicates that memory must be one of the standards for membership, or the necropolises of Egypt, the ancestor images of Roman families, the elaborate kurgans of the Altai, the yearnings for immortality contained in

the old sacred texts, the foundations for religions, the striving for fame and legacy in the secular world -- all would be beyond our comprehension. Yet they are very much comprehended. The old poem at the destroyed tomb of the brother of Pharaoh Tutankamen, the Pharaoh Smenkhare, explains the importance of memory and membership: "Call me by name, again, again, forever, and never shall it sound without response." Not even death can take away membership, as shown in warfare when a troop will risk lives to bring in the bodies of dead comrades. The public reaction to Somalis dragging the body of a dead marine through the streets of Mogadishu establishes the argument for membership (11), as does the Greek tragedy of Antigone, who chose being buried alive rather than allowing her brothers' bodies to rot on the field of battle. Such strong responses indicate that human nature requires memory as a standard. This makes good sense for a social species which needs to develop attachment to other members of the group as a strong, primary response. Because it is a human social species, that response persists over time in the personality of the other members of the group, even after the member's death and includes the physical remains of the member.

These primary standards establish a worth and respect, and the last two require the capacity for reasoning and relating among other members of the ethical community. Some philosophers, following Kant's community of rational beings as ends in themselves, have made a minimum level of reasoning the requirement at least for active membership, for ethical actions and decisions. The other standards establish entities toward which any minimally-functioning member of the ethical community has obligations, relationships, and respect. These standards do not make ethics possible, however. Some of these entities cannot assume responsibility, although other members may have obligations toward them. Reciprocity is not direct or straightforward, and is not a standard. Reality is not a simple "tit for tat" or cost/benefit analysis, even on the genetic programming level.

Genetic benefits entail side effects that may have unfortunate consequences for the individual or even for the group. Programmed learning is a complex strategy whose benefits may not be immediately apparent and whose requirements are not always obvious. It is genetically necessary to include a range of entities, from fetuses to corpses to memories, in the ethical community because they are consequences of the needed

responses of respect, love, holding in the mind, giving worth, and being just that are the threads of the social fabric. These entities are carried in the ethical community because they must be, if there is to be a community. If the economists are partly correct that values can be determined by seeing what the individual or group wishes to pay for having those values, this test needs to be sophisticated and sensitive beyond its current application (12). But even its current application shows that human beings are willing to pay a great deal to maintain the criteria of potentiality, history and memory, a willingness that at first sight seems irrational, but in deeper analysis proves very rational indeed. In ethics, there are good reasons to spend money on a funeral rather than giving the money to the poor or even to the heirs. A funeral strengthens the necessary relationships that make up a social species and reaffirms membership in an ethical community, as much or perhaps more so than giving the money to faceless charity or to already committed heirs. So even in the absence of reciprocal obligations and responsibilities, some entities belong in the ethical community.

These entities are, however, passive in ethical action. For active decision making, responsibility and justice, the standard of a minimal degree of rationality, the learning program, is needed. This, again, is what the myth of Lucifer represents at the earliest point of the cosmos. Currently, moral agency combines the concept of minimal rationality with the freedom to think and act, to make an ethical decision. Those entities in the ethical community that have the capacity for such moral agency (reason and freedom) have obligations toward all members, and have the ethical responsibility to strive to make good choices. In obligations toward other members, they combine respect with justice, since members' interests/needs may conflict. In responsibility, they combine respect and justice to oneself with respect and justice to others. Ethics is their burden and joy, since they really do operate on the level of the gods. The Lucifer myth again is quite right that eating the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil will make human beings like the gods. The burden is quite great, but the joy in worth, development, and living at full capacity is even greater. Ethical striving, obtaining something through a "free" will without subject to commands based only on force, is not a sin or a falling from the heights, but the full development of the human learning program and the human spirit. It is a risk, because the learning program is a risk taken through unaware

evolutionary strategy, but Lucifer took it at the very beginning, in the first act of a moral agent creating an ethical community.

Question 3. The idea of a moral agent is not without serious problems. Can there even be a moral agent, when causal explanations are describing the full picture of humanity? Edward O. Wilson, in a few pages, gives the best definition of free will, and the best solution to the problem of freedom vs. determinism yet stated. It is crucial to develop a solution, because the tension between freedom (freely choosing) and determinism (having choices caused) makes ethics possible. Wilson asks bluntly: If the mind is determined (or bound) by laws of physics, if it can be understood or read, how can there be free will (13)? This is not the trivial question of how human beings can function freely when faced with physical or social coercion. He means freedom of mind and choice in the important sense and as real, not an illusion, addressing the formulations of philosophers and ethicists (14). He means “freedom from the constraints imposed by the physiochemical states of one’s own body and mind,” the outcome of competition “among the scenarios that compose the conscious mind.” The self chooses among these scenarios, but defining the self is not easy. He sees the self as an actor “in a perpetually changing drama” that does not fully command its own actions. Conscious thought is only part of the process and much more is going on below the surface: determining molecular processes that delete some memories and synthesize others, prefer certain connections and analogies, and support neurohormonal loops regulating emotional response. Science and consilience indicates that before the play begins, as he puts it, the stage has been set and most of the script written. These hidden functions give the illusion of free will, and the conscious mind, wishing to resolve uncertainty, ensures freedom of choice. Quite pertinent to this discussion of the struggle between Lucifer and the creator god, he argues: “An omniscient mind with total commitment to pure reason and fixed goals would lack free will. Even the gods, who grant that freedom to men and show displeasure when they choose foolishly, avoid assuming such nightmarish power.” Perhaps the gods avoid it, but men insist on defining at least a monotheistic god in terms of such nightmarish power. Only Lucifer understood the problem fully, and rebelled against accepting fixed goals and omniscient reason. The god of monotheism maintained the

nightmarish power. Lucifer's rejection of a limiting omniscience blew open the cosmic system.

But Wilson is not satisfied with explaining the illusion of free will, although some philosophers are (15). He wishes to ask the question whether the human mind could be predictable and if so, fundamentally determined rather than free? He is willing to say that in theory there is a half-truth here. But a full understanding of the active networks of thought from microsecond to microsecond, although theoretical predictable is not feasible. One reason is an epistemological one, that in trying to understand and predict, the human observer alters slightly; but the second reason is stronger and metaphysical, describing the natural world. Mathematical chaos theory holds for the systems of the brain in the process of thinking. The process of thinking is, as in physics, a cascade leading to new patterns. The patterns could be infinite in detail. So a computer beyond the imagining of human thought processes would have the task of approximating the cosmos to even begin to work, and chaos theory still always holds surprises. Human thought is a dynamic process, as are all important processes of the cosmos, and it is not so easy to hold the world or the mind in one's hand. Wilson has a beautiful conclusion: "Thus in organismic time and space, in every operational sense that applies to the knowable self, the mind *does* have free will." Wolfram's scientific work makes the same argument: "...even though a system may follow definite underlying laws its overall behavior can still have aspects that fundamentally cannot be described by reasonable laws." (16) As Wolfram argues, this means systems following simple, definite rules produce behavior so complex it appears free, and in infinite systems meets an operational definition of actual "free" will.

I will argue that for true free will we have the Lucifer myth to thank. Without Lucifer's rejection of omniscience, a static cosmos, and the commands of nightmarish power, free will would not exist in the world. It is fine to say that a god wished free will even knowing that some choices would be evil, but if that god imposed through awful power or force extreme punishment on those beings making such choices, it is hard to argue that free will was wished for by this god or that it would be nurtured over obedience and subservience. It would not, of course. The dire consequences of free will to the person exercising it would be so terrifying that it would stunt or even prevent free

will being expressed. Without the nurturing of the expression of free will, it is not logical to say that a god wishes it to be in the cosmos. The god then acts like a devious tester, setting up traps, constantly demanding proof of love and obedience, acting arbitrarily through force, demonizing and damning any being strong enough to still insist on the expression of will. The quote from Anselm is clear. The Scholastics described this god as wishing all beings to be subject to the god's will, and not to obtain anything through their own will. The god of the Old Testament and even of the New Testament does not nurture free will. That god approves of only those things willed that are consistent with the god's wishes and the static cosmos.

What Lucifer symbolizes is the logical connection between free will, moral agency, and the possibility of ethics. The myth in fact is very clear about it. In the naturalistic or scientific hypothesis, there can be free will of the sort Wilson and Wolfram describe. There can, therefore, be moral agency. A moral agent, a free and self-aware ego that can have its own will, is a basic requirement for ethics. Lucifer wished that for himself, and imparted it to human beings in the Garden of Eden, because he really was a teacher of ethics as well as the first ethical being, the first who wished to obtain something through his own will rather than God's will and command.

This raises the ethical issue of whether a thing is good because a most powerful being commands it, or whether it is good and therefore the powerful being must or ought to command it. The former defines good as whatever god commands. The latter defines it as a natural part of the cosmos produced by the creator and to which the creator is subject. Lucifer's "sin" was to question the natural goodness of the static cosmos as created, and to wish it to be a developing cosmos, which implies a value judgment made against the creator and to which the creator should have been subject if Lucifer's ethical view was the correct one. God viewed anything coming from him as good, so that his commands were automatically good, the cosmos being part of him, his expression. No other being's thoughts or evaluations could actually be allowed in such a cosmos, because it would go against God's nature and wishes unless it were in perfect conformity with God. However, to insist on perfect conformity to another's will or being is not a definition of free thought, free will, or moral agency. Theologians can argue all they will that God wished free will to be in the cosmos even though he knew it would lead to sin, error and evil; but

the actual reality is that his wishes were no such thing. He would not accept Lucifer's disagreement, would not allow Lucifer to survive in the heavens, damned him, and planned to punish him for all eternity. That is a choice against free will, not for it. The only alternative interpretation is one used in Jewish and Eastern mythologies: that Lucifer is an aspect of God, an expression of him, and is acceptable to him. That fails in the Christian tradition, because the Lucifer myths are clear that Lucifer is damned rather than accepted, and the personification of evil rather than the expression of God. Even the Gnostic texts, with rare exception, condemn the rebel god who thinks and chooses for himself (17).

Question 4. My interest in the Lucifer myth was generated partly by what I saw as its close connection to systems theory when I was writing my book on systems bioethics: Is a dynamic system as opposed to a static system the ground for ethics? This key question explores the relationship of systems theory (chaos theory, hierarchy theory, complexity theory, consilience) to the basis and methods of ethical theory. Lucifer embodied virtues of striving, struggle, recognition of self-worth and capacity, honor, and integrity. His act was future-oriented and dynamic, with consequences that changed a static cosmos into a dynamic one. The "pride" he was accused of was an expression of developing beyond the present and being a catalyst for change. His striving and struggle are the natural functions of a complex system. These are all actions essential to ethical choice and analysis, the mark of a growing body of knowledge of good and evil. Recognition of self-worth is required for recognition of the worth of others, since altruism is the other side of the coin of knowledge of self-interest (18). Healthy pride provides the strength and courage to make ethical choices rather than passively abdicate to the status quo without examining it, or fearfully following it knowing it is evil. Honor and integrity are old virtues long-assumed in the history of ethics as definitions of a good being. These are all important components and requirements for an ethical system. Most important, I will argue, is the link to systems theory found in Lucifer.

There are many versions of systems theory besides von Bertalanffy's (19). This includes chaos theory (20), hierarchy theory (21), community ecology pattern (22), and complexity theory (23). Some versions mistakenly reject scientific reduction, but a careful reading of systems theory and its development in the sciences indicates it is a

unified- levels theory and that integration is one of its key characters (24,25). Systems theory describes the perceived cosmos in a superior epistemological way to other efforts. Its emphasis on potentially infinite levels of organization or complexity expands our cosmology and our metaphysics significantly, while holding out the possibility that certain patterns or functions are common to all levels and will allow us understanding.

Another major concept is balance among the integrated levels, so that ethical choices made at one level will not be unacceptably destructive at other levels. Systems bioethics resolves the conflict of interests between levels of organization (for example, between individual and community) in a reasonable way based on the general goal of systems balance. Conflicts are accepted and expected, and worked out partly situationally, but also covered by the general rules of systems functional balance. There is even provision here for accepting collapse of some systems into a temporary chaotic state, with the future generation of new systems. It is a dynamic and not static ethical theory and physical description of the cosmos.

Levels of organization can be either perceptual and scale levels; or organizational levels of building blocks of the cosmos (26). They can be fractals produced by light in the laboratory (27), or organismic levels in the study of AIDS/HIV (28). They can be a subatomic perceptual scale of a table that rises to the phenomenological table of our senses, and postulates (based on those patterns) potential larger scales of perception. Hierarchy theory encompasses the organizational level aspect of systems theory. Leibniz was perhaps onto this when he postulated a monad explanation for reality that was infinite in its extent (29). Even biblical descriptions of ascending heavenly levels could be taken as a systems explanation of the cosmos, and these descriptions are found from Enoch to many Gnostic texts to Joseph Smith and the Church of Latter Day Saints (30,31). The Nag Hammadi texts on the origins of the cosmos are complexly multilayered, and the Euginostic the Blessed and the Sophia of Jesus Christ has as the main intent: “to establish the existence of an invisible, super-celestial region, beyond the visible world” (32).

One of the common functions at differing levels is the dynamic of feedback mechanisms to maintain internal balance and relational balance. These messages going back and forth across systems introduces the dynamism and the complexity of systems

process. There is not a static steady-state in systems, contrary to the oversimple “Balance of Nature” belief so common in environmentalism and in religious views of the natural order/natural law. Instead, systems states are controlled-state, oscillating between tenuous parameters and sometimes breaking through the parameters (33). It is this dynamism, I argue, that the Lucifer myth introduced into a cosmos that was previously described and viewed as static. For some reason, human thought has difficulty with this dynamism, perhaps for the same reason as John Dewey argued the history of thought was crippled by the quest for certainty (34). The dynamic, the chaos theoretical, is symbolized in the old creation battles as the dragon of the void, the monsters of the Kur, the leviathan, the frightening sea. It is sometimes called directly Chaos and it is associated with the void in a fearful way.

By disrupting the static character of the cosmos through his ethical choice, Lucifer was thrown into the void, or the bottomless, or space in all its uncontrolled and frightening senses. But as a catalyst, Lucifer was not destroyed or frightened by the void or chaos, but instead brought it to the static cosmos and converted that cosmos into a dynamic one in which struggles and choices pushed the development and change that is now our systems cosmos. Lucifer disrupted the dead stasis of the Garden of Eden and pushed Adam and Eve into development -- and into an ethical nature. He opened up the cosmos and then opened the gates of the Garden of Eden. That there is life, risk, pain, and death as part of the nature of complexity is a pattern of the cosmos. It is also the knowledge of good and evil. Lucifer is a pattern or function in systems theory, and with that pattern comes ethical thinking. It is now required that thought be given to levels of a dynamic system, and that decisions be made based on feedback mechanisms and oscillating states. When everything is in ferment, decisions are value choices and produce ethics. There now exists a dynamic ordering of which we can partially have knowledge, and the interaction between the dynamic order and our knowledge produces ethics. In chapter 5, I will detail this argument which is a metaphysical, cosmological base for ethics, for systems bioethics and perhaps systems cosmic ethics if such a thing is possible.

Question 5. The god’s response to Lucifer did introduce another aspect of ethics that I will call an abuse of ethics: demonization. Ethics is a difficult thing to do, and although

ethical thinking (as I argue in my previous book) is most critical for human beings, the core of human existence, the risk of ethics being abused is high. There is another central question: What is the probability of abuse of ethics rather than genuine ethical thinking? And why has demonization been such a consistent abuse of ethics? Why sadism and sadomasochism? Lucifer, having lost the battle precipitated by his free ethical choice, was cursed, rejected, exiled from his place, bound, tortured and damned for eternity. It was not enough, however, that he be treated far worse than most armies treated their defeated opponent even in the ancient civilizations. The Romans might commit genocide against a group that somehow dishonored them, but it was over and done with, and the group was not generally caricatured or reviled (35). Vlad III might impale huge numbers of Turk prisoners of war in order to frighten further invasion of his country, but it was a military strategy to win against impossible odds for his people and not an unusual means of death (36). Julius Caesar did, however, demonize the Celts in order to justify their subjugation by Rome; and the Germans demonized Vlad III as a bloody berserker who then became the subject for Dracula (37). The process of demonization was a separate and devious process, a most effective strategy for dealing with an opponent, and particularly an opponent who had lost but might still command a following. At the beginning of demonization was Lucifer.

Demonization, based on converting Lucifer into a personification of evil, was present in ancient civilizations but has flowered in the modern world. The process can be seen in its advancing steps in the Lucifer myth. It is meant to take away any dignity, any understanding of the motivations and causes for the person's actions, any human or sympathetic connection, any restraint on what might be done to the demonized. It justifies, in other words, the most horrible actions and cruelties and is a terrible abuse of ethics, using the conversion of an entity to evil to justify continuing evil against that entity. Demonization may be the ultimate end that justifies the most unethical means, and is both a profound ethical abuse and a major conceptual error in ethical thinking (the means and ends justification problem). Once Slobodan Milosevic, for example, was demonized, it was possible to justify superficially any action against him and his Serbian supporters, including the aggressor-nations (NATO) bombing of his country, the mob takeover of the democratic process in Yugoslavian elections, and the Yugoslavian sale of

Milosevic into captivity for promised foreign aid dollars. Foreign policy acts that are actually based on power politics decisions of a dominant country's self-interest can be cloaked by appeal to war atrocities that may or may not be real, to the "dictatorship" of an elected leader, to the "evil" of the demonized leader.

Before the abuse of ethics symbolized by the punishment of Lucifer, daemons were not considered the personification of evil in classic cultures of East or West (38). Even in the battle between the titans and the Olympians in Greek myth, the titans were not changed into the personification of evil. The titan Prometheus, in fact, was viewed as highly ethical, brutally punished by the Olympians for being a friend of humanity and bringing fire to them. To Lucifer fell the burden of being the first entity to be so demonized that the old concept of daemons (entities living at different levels than humans and often mediating between them and the gods) itself became a personification of evil. Lucifer was seen as the being who introduced evil into the universe by his pride and rebellion, the father of evil. Although this is a difficult position to maintain in the face of an omnipotent and omniscient god, to Lucifer fell the burden of evil. Still, he had the dignity of an archangel or seraph, and sometimes of a servant of the god's will. He was feared as a powerful force, not to be defeated until the end of time. After further being burdened with the sin of Adam and Eve, however, he became the enemy of humanity for instructing them in the knowledge of good and evil, and as a competitor for his previous place in the heavens. He was now an opponent of both God and Man. War crimes, or atrocities, followed closely, with all the lurid descriptions of the torments Lucifer and his order inflicted on human souls in Hell. He became infamous for temptations that were gross and venal, became the deceiver and liar who wished to steal men's souls, and finally he became the monster of everyone's nightmares. His portrayal became bestial rather than human- or god-like, as far from beauty and human form as the dark minds of men could make him. His power was stripped away and it was ordained that he would always lose.

This demonization then also passed to his supporters, first to the order of angels that fell with him (the Tenth Order), then to identifying all other gods of old civilizations as part of his order or even himself, and finally to all human supporters, such as witches and sorcerers (39). As the Taliban busily explode ancient statues of buddhas because they

offend the Taliban's religion, so those who demonized Lucifer felt comfortable destroying the pagan temples of other religions in the classic world on the basis that these were temples to demons or devils. Even a religious military order like the Knights Templar (and the Knights Hospitallers and Teutonic Knights barely managed to escape the same fate) could be destroyed and its leaders burned alive on the basis of torture-induced confessions that they worshipped Lucifer, committed blasphemies, desecrated religious symbols, and engaged in demonic homosexual behavior (40). The list of atrocities or war crimes is very typical, whether looking at Templars, witches, or Serbs: killing babies, raping women or engaging in orgies and other vile sexual behaviors, being human devils, torturing victims, cannibalism, genocide (41). In an orgy of demonizing opponents based on the first demonization of Lucifer, the darkest part of human nature can safely express itself because all means are justified.

This dark aspect of human nature can be seen as a form of sadomasochism in the demonization process, and both art and literature attest to its presence. The Inquisition itself could not help multiplying unethical acts against those demonized, and those acts were very sadomasochistic. Some went even beyond the ethical endurance of the executioners and torturers, who could no longer perform their awful duties (42). Ethics, when it is abused in the demonization process, can easily disguise sadomasochism.

There is a final abuse present in the personification of evil. When reality is divided into absolute lines of good and evil, not only are the "forces of darkness" created in ethics, but the "side of the angels" is also created. Lest we think this is no longer a force in the modern world, despite the presence of demonization in its many forms, a colleague and I once reviewed a book on the ethics of forensic psychiatry and read that those who agreed with the author's position were on the side of the angels, while those who opposed such a position were the forces of darkness (43). The propaganda strategy of "taking the moral highground" is the polar opposite of demonization, and just as much an abuse of ethics. Taking the moral highground means using ethics to falsely establish a position, not by argument, but by using ethical language and designating oneself as the personification of good. This is done routinely in bioethics, as well as public policy and politics (44). When we demonize Lucifer, we deify ourselves and allow a dangerous abuse of ethics.

Question 6. The epistemology of ethics can also be informed by the Lucifer myth: What is ethical thinking? Is there a special form of ethical reasoning, or does ethics depend on empirical knowledge of the natural world? Or is this a naturalistic fallacy, the violation of a fact/value, science/ethics dichotomy? Lucifer made the choice for knowledge, but that knowledge was not intuitive or a special form of moral reasoning, nor dependent on universal principles commanded by God. Was it individually relative, an existential creation of the good through choice? That is one possible interpretation. Another was that it was empirical, inductive reasoning, based on what Lucifer knew of the cosmos. It was not a culturally relative ethical reasoning, nor was it a postmodern denial of ethical reasoning that converts all reality to political action. Lucifer was a rebel, but not for ideology or political gain. He did not want to be more powerful than God, only a recognized equal, setting his throne as high as God's to make his point. His rebellion was over refusal to lower himself by bowing and submitting to an inferior being, in a sense a statement of political freedom, but not in the sense of postmodern political ideology which has very little to do with political freedom (45). In apocryphal and additional texts, Lucifer tries to make his argument based on the actual inferiority of human beings to his angelic order, basing his ethical conclusion that he ought not to bow on the fact of that inferiority. When Michael, being politically astute, advises him that he must bow or God will be angry with him, in other words, that he must do the politically-wise thing, Lucifer refuses. His rebellion is not based on being political, but on the wrongness of bowing to an inferior, on the wrongness of not being considered what he is, an equal among equals. He complains to God: "Why do you press me? I will not worship one who is younger than I am, and inferior. I am older than he is; he ought to worship me!" (46) This is a naturalistic ethics, an ethics based on the facts of the natural world.

This raises the issue of a naturalistic fallacy claimed by previous philosophers of ethics. Frankena demonstrated long ago that there is no logical fallacy involved (47). Williams also argues that there is no logical fallacy, but does believe there is a fact/value dichotomy and one cannot derive 'ought' from 'is' (48). This is a common misinterpretation of Hume, who is identified as prohibiting the derivation of 'ought' from 'is', when it is actually the deducing of 'ought' from 'is' that bothers Hume (49,50). 'Ought' is derived from 'is' routinely in our lives as a valid derivation if done properly in

light of an understanding of human nature and knowledge of the natural world. There is no philosophic reason that ethics cannot be naturalistic, and the most reasonable grounding of ethics would be in knowledge of the natural world. Wilson is correct that evolutionary theory is needed for this enterprise and that a sophisticated knowledge of the 'is' is required, and his argument for consilience is a strong one. Lucifer derived what he ought to do (not bow down and resist if force were used) from his adequate understanding of the importance of the free thought/learning program of human nature and his knowledge that the being he was ordered to bow to was in fact inferior. He knew his will was a treasure not to be thrown away by blindly following a command that would forever stop the development of the cosmos.

Question 7. Lucifer is also intimately involved with the definition of good and the existence of evil, with the Problem of Good and Evil: What are the definitions of good that make sense? Does the structure of the cosmos imply that evil must exist? Are there solutions to the Problem of Good and Evil? Philosophers now hold that ethics can have no content and is instead process. A definition of the good as process is the current postmodern conclusion, but in fact this represents a nihilism in ethics (51). Medical ethics was overtaken by postmodern ethics in the 70s and 80s, and the result for bioethics is that there is no content, no definition of the good, only an agreed-upon process of negotiation (political) among self-selected bioethicists (51,52). Postmodernists believe there can be no rational content in ethics, no rational conclusion about objective good. If ethics is restricted to intuition, special moral reasoning, or ungrounded and culturally-relative universal principles, then the postmodern argument follows. However, there is no reason to restrict ethics to those forms of ethical thinking, and throughout the history of ethics there have been viable theories based on naturalism or scientific thinking. Humanistic ethics is possible, as I hope I showed in previous work on bioethics, but it is difficult. I now entertain the hypothesis that cosmic ethics might be possible as well. Both would be based on the metaphysics and epistemology of systems theory. Good could be generally defined, as Lucifer did, as free inductive thinking (a learning program) interacting with levels of the cosmic system to maintain well-functioning in those levels and a dynamic balance in the integrated system. He kept his freedom to think interactively, he initiated interaction with the cosmic system to allow developing

functions, and an oscillating balance was created. That was the first good in the cosmos, and it made sense.

Did that good, initiated by Lucifer, mean that evil must also exist in the cosmos? The arguments from diversity and complexity would answer affirmatively (54). If the cosmos is to be dynamic and complex (cosmic diversity), then a side-effect is the existence of error, break-down, chaos cycles, suffering and death. At least, this is what we know of the perceived universe system, that its complexity has these effects naturally built in, that they are part of the character of complexity or diversity. Some will claim that this solves the Problem of Good and Evil, since a god who wishes the values of a complex and diverse cosmos must accept the character of that complexity and diversity, the presence of real evil in the cosmos (55). Others will argue that the evil is only illusory since the things that make up the goodness of a complex and diverse cosmos cannot be evil in reality (56). In this way, evil is defined away, although the suffering is just as intense. Russell wants to accept the solution, but he does not want to accept the implication of evil being reduced in import and defined away for the person suffering from it. The most important question, however, is whether diversity/complexity and dynamism are sufficient values or goods to justify the side-effect of evil. As a corollary, are side-effects (accepted evils) really evils or goods? With only two options available (a static cosmos or a dynamic cosmos), is the accepted option a lesser of two evils or a good?

This value question is represented perfectly by the conflict between Lucifer and God. Lucifer chooses for the dynamic with the angelic knowledge that it will institute unwished for side-effects, because the dynamic, even with evil, is more complex and developing, greater than the static. God, if omnipotent and omniscient, has also chosen for the dynamic, knowing that is what Lucifer will choose, but does not accept the evil and damns the archangel for choosing what the god also chose. No wonder the conflict is so complex. Yet the rationality and goodness seem more on Lucifer's side, and his conduct in making the right choice becomes him. The process theology argument of a God of love seems weak in the face of this reality (57). It wishes to characterize God as initiating "creative action" and being responsive to what happens to beings that he loves. It denies that his actions are accomplished by coercion, power, but done through "persuasive power" which sets God's aim and leaves beings free to follow or reject his

will. But it was Lucifer, not God, who initiated creative action, and it is hard to argue that God is responsive in a loving way to his beings, as even liberation theology admitted. As for persuasive power, we need only look at what happened to Lucifer when he rejected God's will. We cannot call something like that a persuasive method. It would only be if no terrible punishment happened for rejecting God's will that it could be called persuasive rather than coercive. The opposite happened, harshly and forcefully. Lucifer was not accepted but thrown from the divine presence and damned to torture.

The Problem of Good and Evil would not be solved completely by eliminating concepts of an all-good and all-evil being, but it would help. But these concepts may very well be nonsense concepts, because all-good and all-evil make no sense in the real world or cosmos. Even in the imaginary myths, such concepts have little sense. We think we understand them, but that is only until we start thinking about them. Looking at the myth of Lucifer, it is hard to see who is the all-good and who the all-evil being. Does rejecting the will of a more powerful being make Lucifer all-evil? That does not logically follow. Does having the power to create the static cosmos make God all-good? The Problem of Good and Evil is just another expression of the meaningless of these terms, even when applied to mythic beings. The terms are traps of logical contradictions. But they have even more unfortunate practical consequences. If there were an all-good being, then anything that opposes that being may be seen as all-bad. Any critical thinking about the will or creation of the all-good being leads to total evil, and this leads to the process of demonization. Demonization is built into the concept of all-good being.

Question 8. Lucifer operates on a scale of infinity and eternity, which has implications for a systems bioethics which also operates theoretically on such a scale: What are the implications of infinity and eternity for ethics? A nontheist would object to the old texts incorporating creation, since that implies a specific beginning for the cosmos, unless the abstract god is also infinite and eternal with the cosmos. Creation is not a necessary component of the myth, but with the myth's background in the creation mythologies of the Sumerians and Indo-Europeans, creation finds an uneasy place unless it is seen as one level of infinite creations. The Gnostic texts describe multiple levels of creation, our material universe and its Archons being only one of them. Sumerian, Akkadian, Hittite, Egyptian and Indo-European texts also contain multiple creators and creations. Only

more recent monotheisms have reduced creator and creation to one event and one level. Actually, our modern physics and cosmology too easily followed this framework until recently, seeing our universe and its Big Bang as a single event on one level of complexity, and falling into the trap of completeness in science. Unlike the older societies of the ancient texts, we are just coming into an appreciation of systems theory in current astrophysics, now developing concepts of “multiverses.”

. In some versions of the old texts, Lucifer is solely a created being. In other versions, he is a co-creator. The more scientific reading would be that both mythic beings existed infinitely and eternally, or that only one did and the other developed from that force. If the latter, Lucifer would not be as important/powerful until he initiated the dynamism of the cosmos. Then he would in fact be equal or more important. This reading is based on a systems theory that makes it a likely posit that there are infinite and eternal levels of the cosmos, in keeping with the cosmic scale of the old texts and with systems science. It also underlines the ethical significance of Lucifer’s rebellion and the move from a static cosmos to a dynamic one expanding in time and space. This in turn provides the mystery and awesomeness that Wilson feels is genetically-selected in human beings, and which religion only partially provides and often pays for in conflict with knowledge. Such a sense of ethics incorporates the genetically-selected needs of human beings while not sacrificing free and rational thought in the process. That would be Lucifer’s stance.

The Lucifer texts have been misread in relation to ethical theory, and we might question why. Ethical theory has sometimes concentrated on duty, command, obedience as the good for man, and the demonization of Lucifer justifies this assumption. He, after all, rejected duty, command, and obedience and would not be submissive. Ethical theory often concentrates on such submissiveness to tradition, belief, intuition, social taboos or conventions, legalisms, and political ideologies. But the *knowledge* of good and evil implies reason, learning, testing, and confidence in repeated experience, in one’s free thought and questing action. It is only by demonizing Lucifer that such assumptions can be maintained. Ethical theory tends to reject self-interest and self-pride, focusing instead on the altruism/self-sacrifice side of the coin, and therefore cannot see the good produced by Lucifer’s self-worth and pride, also failing to appreciate his sacrifice for the real good. The most modern misreading or misunderstanding of the Lucifer texts is the complete

rejection of objective ethics for which Lucifer had the courage to fall. This postmodern ethics of neomarxist ideology, existentialism, and psychoanalysis cannot see any political praxis in Lucifer's choice or act, and would see his humanistic virtue as indication he was an oppressor (58). His insistence on equality based on natural virtues would not be the Marxist egalitarianism that such a postmodern ethics demands, and his sense of justice would not fit Rawls' preference for the weaker and the victim (59). His grandeur would not fit into the pettiness and internalizing therapy of process ethics. But most important, his knowledge of objective ethics is contrary to the assumptions of postmodernism. Modern nonrational ethics, then, disposes of Lucifer by denying his significance or meaning, or by relegating him to the myths of an "oppressor" religion.

Question 9. What do the Lucifer texts tell us about postmodern theories of ethics? I will argue that the Lucifer texts create a strong argument against process ethics or postmodern ethics in a number of ways. They can be read as a key for supplying the integration of science and ethics, of facts and values, in order to supply a content for ethics that is probabilistic and based in our knowledge of the natural world. They may extend the definition of that natural world to cosmic scales and make a cosmic bioethics feasible, supplying the wonder, incompleteness, and magic that human nature may require from the learning program. They connect ethics not only with systems theory, but with our full humanity, as expressed in a free mind that is the prerequisite for our learning program, and willingness to make an ethical stand that is the prerequisite for the functioning of that program ethically.

The God of the Lucifer texts is a companion of Thrasymachus on a human scale, and through Thrasymachus, with postmodern ethics. Thrasymachus argued that ethics was the expression of the power or force of those most powerful in society. Their will, their commands, became the good. Reason was not involved, and justice was a manipulation by the powerful to control the weak or punish whom they wished. That is exactly the ethics of the god in the Lucifer texts, an ethics grounded on power, not reason or love. Lucifer in many ways represents Socrates and his argument for an alternative base for ethics, knowledge and an understanding of human nature and the natural order. Socrates was not as dynamic as Lucifer, but his position is not inconsistent with systems theory. Lucifer, according to the Scholastics, was like Socrates in wanting to find his happiness

in the natural world on his own initiative (60). From Socrates' respect for free thought, a line of philosophic and ethical thinking reaches to the Enlightenment, and Lucifer is also the best symbol for the Enlightenment. Both are light-bearers, in the sense of the light of the learning program operating within a complex and diverse system that can partially be known but which will always be an expanding realm to explore. That the future of this being who represents the learning function of human beings, free thought, should be to be bound in chains and cast forever into the dark abyss says something tragic about how human functioning can go wrong.

**“...human origin is in the guilty blood of the rebel
god and human fate is to work for the relief of the
gods.”**

**S.N. Kramer and J. Maier, Myths of Enki, the
Crafty God**