

Chapter 7: Light Against the Dark

Thesis:

Light imagery is an ancient and universal archetypal symbol. Light and contrasts, the darkness, with other central contrasts: bondage and liberation, exile and return, injustice and justice, violence and peace falsehood and truth, death and life and related stories appeared in the Bible are not literal, historical, or a factual truth but a metaphorical truth. These contrasts all have a personal as well as a political meaning.

Problem:

One must first understand the meaning of the word “Archetype” and “Symbol” and difference between the personal and political.

An archetype is an image, a “type” imprinted in human **consciousness** from the beginning, a dawn of time. If one acknowledges stories of birth of Jesus and the light narratives in the bible are not factual truth but a metaphorical truth, one need to wonder and read the time, places and characters in the bible narrative symbolically and understand the archetypal symbolism in ways to satisfy both personal (individual consciousness/inner world) and political (collective consciousness/outer world).

Argumentation:

Light Against the Darkness

- “Jesus is born in the deepest darkness-in the middle of the night at the winter solstices”
This is not historical time, but parabolic time, metaphorical time, symbolic time.

Light as Archetypal symbol

- Light Archetype is an image, a “type” imprinted in human consciousness from the beginning, a dawn of time.

Light in the Old Testament:

- First act of creation. “Let there be light; and there was a light.” **Primordial light.**

- Fourth day of creation; light of the sun, moon and stars.
- For Abraham, the father of Israel, God's presence is imaged as "a smoking fire pot and flaming torch" appearing to him "in a deep and terrifying darkness" (Gen.15:12-17)
- For Jacob, the father of the twelve tribes of Israel, experiences in the night a fiery ladder with angels descending and ascending upon it and exclaims, "This is the gate of heaven" (Gen. 28:17)
- In the prophets coming of light with the coming of the ideal king.
- In the book of Isaiah, light symbolizes the glory of God and God's promise to Jerusalem.

Light in the New Testament

- Paul's life-transforming experience of the road to Damascus. A risen Christ as light during noon of the day.
- Light and darkness are central to the Jesus in the gospel of John. "In the beginning" was the Logos and Logos was God. Logos was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it" (John 1: 4-5)
- "New Jerusalem" (Rev 21:1~22;5) In it there will be no more tears, no more mourning and crying and pain, and death will be no more..... and the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of God is its light.....and there will be no night there.
- Matthew uses the light symbolism in story of the star of Bethlehem that led the wise men or men.
- King Herod, like a new pharaoh, as a force of "darkness". rival to the king of "light."
- The word "salvation" like word "savior". Jesus is God's salvation and not a post death existence, with going to heaven.
- Word including rescue, deliverance, liberation, protection, healing and being made whole had all hear- and -now meaning.
- Glory in the night sky. Angels appearing in the night to shepherds. "Messiah, the Lord has born"
- Angels appearing and speaking to women at the tomb in the Easter morning. "Why do you look for the living among the dead,"
- The words "Savior," "Messiah," and "Lord"= Jesus. All have meaning of "Savior"

Roman Imperial Theology:

- An angelic message has a second framework of meaning. It's countering Roman imperial theology.

Light is also central to imperial theology. Augustus (born Octavian) was conceived by the god Apollo in his human mother, Atia and Augustus was “Son of God” by Apollo who was the god of light. Apollo was the coming light to the world.

Peace of earth

- With Roman imperial theology, the emperor was the who had brought peace on earth. Peace of empire is based on oppression and violence. To those who conquer.
- Jesus “good news to the poor, those who are oppressed.” “release to the captives”, “sight to the blind.” and to let the oppressed go free”.

Rome: Apollo or Python/Dragon?

- Nero=Python/Dragon 666 beast (Rome/empire=Python). Roman gospel, good news) is darkness,
- Nero and the Roman Imperial theology is not son of god, son of light, savior, deliverer. but the Beast and the empire has no glory.
- Jesus is the new Apollo. True son of God, son of light, savior and deliverer.

Critique:

“Like much of the Bible’s language, the imagery of **light** is both personal and political. The contrasts between darkness and light are correlated with other central contrasts: bondage and liberation, exile and return, injustice and justice, violence and peace, falsehood and truth, death and life. These contrasts all have a personal meaning as well as a political meaning. **It is important to see both.** So it is with the stories of Jesus’s birth. They address our personal yearning and the politics of his world and ours. To see only the personal meaning is to miss half of their meaning.” -Borg & Crossan-

- Authors stated in their conclusion. “It is important to see both” personally and politically on the imagery of light and the archetypal symbols in the bible. However, I writing was too focus on the political situation during the 1st century Rome vs. Jesus. What it means to be personal!

Meditation:

- If the story of Jesus’s birth is not a literal , historical, or a factual truth, is all stories in the bible not literal truth?

. How do we separate personal and political Jesus?