

## **DESTRUCTION OR TRANSFORMATION? LEADERSHIP AND THE ARCHETYPAL FIELD**

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When I was preparing for the ministry almost twenty-five years ago, I worked full-time as director of religious education in a church, raised three children through their teenage years, and managed to stay married to my current husband. My life was turbulent and chaotic, as it was for so many of us who sacrificed much to follow our call wherever it led. And like all things that are not necessarily what we think they ought to be, divinity school was not always divine, and there were challenges in the school and in the church I served. It was confusing and difficult to be in organizations that were supposed to be grounded in lofty ideals but which caused so much pain and suffering. One of the faculty at the seminary, however, provided a key that allowed me not only to survive, but has helped me frame what it means to be a leader and a human being ever since.

In a Ministerial Leadership Class, the Rev. Dr. Kendyll Gibbons said “God doesn’t lead us to destruction, but to transformation; the unfortunate part for us is that it feels the same.” Those words kept me going when I was brought to my knees by tsunamis I could not anticipate because I was too young or inexperienced, when the weight of the church was on my shoulders, when my children were suffering from my commitments to serving others, or when the Board was out for my head. I kept remembering that I was not being called to destruction but to transformation.

Thus, when the Director of Programs at the Assisi Institute, Lorelee Scott-Conforti, invited me to be one of the speakers in the ‘Transformational Leadership for ‘Turbulent Times’ series, we agreed that I would explore the spiritual mandates of transformational leadership. This was based on our combined experience as educators and leaders in both church and leadership

studies. We knew that very few programs, classes, workshops, or textbooks addressed the existential reality that leadership entails suffering. In addition, there is little recognition that suffering is a spiritual and conversion experience which can lead us into conscious relationship with the highest and best values that leaders serve, God, which we also understand as Psyche/Self/Source of Being. It was this understanding of God that Carl Jung spoke about in the interview “Face to Face” with John Freeman in 1969. He was asked whether he believed in God. He replied, “I know. I don’t need to believe. I know.”<sup>1</sup> What he knew and what I allude to in this paper is the lived psychological reality of Being beyond all human endeavor and understanding, which we call God. To be clear, I am not attempting to read theological formulations as though they were the accurate rendering of the mystery that is the transcendence of the numinous itself. Instead, I understand that the word “God” points to the lived human experience of connection to that essential mystery which we, in our finite awareness, call “God” and which can be also described by the word “Psyche.”

What I experienced in seminary, in the church, and in my life made more sense when I heard Harry Hutson and Martha Johnson’s presentation on rogue waves in the second session of the Transformational Leadership series. They spoke from their experiences as leaders in the field and reminded us that even when a leader is prepared to serve the highest and best, even when she or he has the requisite skills, compassion, and foresight, there are times when a rogue wave will come and knock them off their feet.

As Hutson explained, a rogue wave cannot be foreseen or predicted; it is unlike a tsunami, as there are no warnings and no way to prepare for the destruction that will come. Leaders need to know that they will get hit by these waves and that the consequences of the wave are not personal, nor are they avoidable. Martha Johnson brought the experience of a leader hit by a rogue wave to life as she described having to resign her position as head of the General Services Administration over a scandal in Las Vegas in 2012. She spoke of the painful and lonely process of coming to accept the fact that as a leader, her job was to protect her people and to take the consequences for acts that she was in no way able to avert or change.

I was inspired by their talk and decided to call the Rev. Dr. Gibbons, first of all to make sure that I was attributing the quote correctly, and more importantly, to tell her how grateful I was for how her words over 25 years ago have held and contained me when I was in the very throes of the transformational process and felt as though I were being destroyed.

When I hung up, I realized that she expressed the archetypal field of leadership in a very loving and subtle way. In the class, she shared her own painful experiences of being a leader at church and of the personal cost to her

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1 William McGuire and R. F. C. Hull, eds., *C. G. Jung Speaking: Interviews and Encounters* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987), 428.

and her family. What she said to us came out of her own struggle with the God who called her to serve. She had been brought to her knees in profound ways and had come to accept the mantle of leadership because she knew what she was being asked to pay. Her response to the demands of leadership was a resounding and carefully considered “Yes.” Dr. Gibbons carried her authentic power lightly, having earned the right to be heard and believed because she had gone through the valley of the shadow of death and come out. And, because she was somehow all right, I had hope that I would be too. All of this is to say, that it is not merely in movies or stories or great people that we see the field of leadership lived out, but also in those close to us, mentors, teachers, and supervisors, who carry their suffering in dignity and lead us into our destinies through the turbulent waters of life.

This call to Dr. Gibbons was important for both of us. For her, it came as a surprise and a delight that without knowing it, she had made a lasting difference in someone’s life. For me, it brought the insight that the field of leadership is alive, dynamic and fully real at all times. When articulated generatively, it continues to affect those led through space and time. And, just as importantly to remember, when articulated non-generatively, it continues to affect those led through time and space. When we undergo the process of transformation and come out with dignity, grace, and character, we serve others. Even when the rogue waves hit, even when, like Martha Johnson shared, we lose the leadership role, how we exit and what we do with our lives continues to affect the field of leadership.

Being able to listen to my colleagues as part of this series brought me to another insight, which includes the power of repetition and leads to incarnation. In the first session, Dr. Michael Conforti described leadership as an archetypal constant, as the expression of a dynamic field, which, once constellated, will constrain the behavior of the leader and the environment, either in a generative or non-generative way. According to Conforti, a field is an a-priori, pre-existent, non-spatial, non-temporal energetic pattern with its own particular characteristics, proclivities, and trajectories that can be recognized by their incarnation in matter. It is understood that there are multi-layered and complex explications of any particular field, however, any one aspect of the field illustrates the dominant nature of the field. We recognize the field when we see the pattern revealed in behavior; a partial expression reveals the whole pattern. This pre-formed field exists *in potentia*; when certain conditions are met, it will be lived into and brought to material expression in the individual and the collective. Whether the field is expressed generatively or not depends on the human’s alignment to that field. This alignment, in turn, is contingent on the ego’s relationship to the field, whether it can be aligned to the more generative aspects or if it will be constrained to behave in a certain way by the field itself. This requires consciousness and effort on the part of the ego to recognize that it is, in fact, aligned with and in service to the mandates of

a field. Consciousness and awareness, then, are the means by which the ego can align to the generative aspects inherent in the field. When the ego is not related in awareness, the field will exert itself on the ego and repetition of non-generative behaviors is ensured. In either case, the field, when constellated, will express itself and we will see what is being expressed by the field through its embodiment in material form, i.e., behavior.<sup>2</sup>

There are mandates and characteristics of the field that will not be mutated by human experience. Conforti defined the essence of leadership as predicated on the person's innate and inborn nature to care for others, the community, the family, the organization, or the collective, and he told the story of how the First People chose future leaders. The elders of the tribe would go to the playground and observe to see which child was sensitive to the one who was left out, hurting, hungry, or being bullied. The child who went to sit with the outcast, the one who would stand up to the bullies, the one who would share their lunch with the one who did not have enough, would be chosen to become their future leader. The elders were looking for the one who was attuned to the least among them and acted, not in the service of their own popularity and self-interest, but to make life better for someone else. They knew that at the heart of the archetypal field of leadership is the willingness, the ability, and the ego strength necessary to serve the very best interests of the community, and they also knew that there would always be a price to pay for the individual.

As the series continued, I heard Dr. Carol Pearson articulate the growing complexity of an interdependent world, the requirements of increased resilience, flexibility, collaboration, and the necessity of living with greater ambiguity. In *The Transforming Leader*, Dr. Pearson details the formation of the Fetzer Institute Leadership for Transformation Project as growing out of an urgent sense from graduate students that anachronistic models of leadership that were being taught were unrealistic and unachievable in the situations they faced. Along with her colleagues in the fields of education and leadership development, they engaged in a three-year project with transformational leaders in many fields. The result of those conversations was to recognize that leadership that truly served the needs of those led was based on leaders' exquisite attunement to both their inner life and outer life. Leadership is "the dynamic interrelationship between a leader's inner life, which affects behaviors; the effects of those behaviors on the outer world of people, events, and structures; the impact of experiences in the outer world on the leader's attitudes and emotions. . . ." <sup>3</sup> In other words, leadership that can emerge in our

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2 Michael Conforti, *Field, Form, and Fate: Patterns in Mind, Nature, and Psyche* (New Orleans: Spring Journal Books, 1999).

3 Carol S. Pearson, "Introduction: The Transforming Leader: New Needs for New Times," in *The Transforming Leader: New Approaches to Leadership for the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Carol S. Pearson (San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc., 2012), 8.

increasingly complex world requires whole human beings who lead with their heads, “hearts, souls, and spirits.”<sup>4</sup> This spoke powerfully of the generative leader who is related to his or her own highest values and who engages in the work of self-knowledge and understanding.

I listened closely as Dr. Letizia Amadini-Lane shared images given to her as Vice-President of Employee Value Proposition at GlaxoSmithKlein. In that position, Dr. Amadini-Lane had requested that leaders, managers, and workers send her images of how they perceived themselves as leaders and how the workers perceived leadership, and she used those images to further leadership development across the company. The images provided us deep insight into how people articulate the entire field of leadership, from the vantage point of those who lead as well as of those who follow. She showed the images of the pilot who saved everyone on the plane when it would have crashed into the Hudson River, depicting the leader as one who assumes responsibility for saving others from disasters or leading them through a crisis. There were images of lone mountain climbers, those who carry the mantle and the burden of leadership, illuminating the great personal cost to the leader. From those who were considered followers, she shared an image of a lighthouse, illustrating the need and desire for guidance that leaders are supposed to provide if the system and organization is to thrive. She also displayed an image of a hand holding a small tree, whose roots were encased in soil, the leaves green and branches flourishing. That spoke of the need for safety, containment, nurture and care.

These images poignantly showed how followers need guidance, care, and nurture. And I suddenly understood the essential archetypal constancy of a field in a more profound way. The field of leadership is really always the same; the new articulations are a result of all the ways that the field has been constellated and expressed because they have informed the field, added to the complex possibilities, or diminished them. The essential mandates remained and will always remain, and that is crucial for our work in the world, because it matters not only to the humans affected but also to field itself.

That new insight took me back to my own work on the field of leadership as part of my training in Archetypal Pattern Analysis. In this work, I had defined the field of leadership as that which calls into being someone or something with the ability to exercise power and authority in the service of and in relationship with the Self/Psyche.

Leadership is a field that will constellate when the need from the collective arises. For example, when the Hebrews were enslaved in Egypt, they needed someone with the strength and ability to exercise tremendous power to get them out. When there is oppression, suffering, collective angst, turbulence, or chaos, the field sets into motion the one who can respond to this and lead the collective out of the crisis. Another way to say this is that transformational

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4 Ibid.

leadership always emerges out of turbulence—it must. Whether or not it emerges generatively is up to the human who is called to enter and carry that field, as well as on the collective's own orientation and ability to change. As we know from dynamical systems theory, sometimes the individual or the collective is refractory to change; no matter how strong the perturbation, the system cannot change.

When something gets constellated in the collective, when there is some turbulence, it will constellate in the individual as well. Marie-Louise von Franz explains this epiphenomenon of the field in *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*. When an archetype gets constellated, it will spark a corresponding response in the archetypal totality of the Psyche because “An archetype is a specific psychic impulse, producing its effect like a single ray or radiation, and at the same time a whole magnetic field expanding in all directions.”<sup>5</sup> In *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales*, von Franz more clearly states the nature of the relationship between the need for renewal in the collective and the function of the individual to bring new life to a dying and outmoded collective value. She asserts that the king (or the CEO or any other person in the role of leadership) is the carrier of the “mystical life power of the nation or the tribe and guarantees the physical and psychological well-being of the people.”<sup>6</sup> Inevitably, “every symbol which has taken shape and form in collective human consciousness wears out after a certain time and resists renewal owing to a certain inertia of consciousness.”<sup>7</sup> For example, when the ruling collective values have lost their power, when they have become rigid and lifeless, a hero, prince, or dummling is activated to renew and rejuvenate the ailing land and people. Sometimes the renewal comes from within the same dominant, i.e., a prince, and sometimes, it comes from the unexpected place, from the farthest reaches and corners of the land. But come it must because the need for renewal will activate the energy necessary to bring new life into a land where the ruling collective values have lost their numinosity, power, and efficacy.<sup>8</sup> Regardless of from whence the renewal will emerge, the individual will have to do the work, overcome the obstacles, and bring back the treasure that will bring new life to the collective.

This is evident in the Exodus story, as we can trace how Moses went through an internal transformation and was thus able to lead the people through the desert, because he had gone through the desert experience himself. The inner personal journey is the template for the outer journey of the collective. This Exodus journey, then, is firmly embedded in the field of leadership as

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5 Marie-Louise von Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales* (Boston: Shambhala Press, 1996), 3.

6 Marie-Louise von Franz, *Shadow and Evil in Fairy Tales* (Boston: Shambhala Press, 1995), 26.

7 *Ibid.*, 27.

8 von Franz, *The Interpretation of Fairy Tales*, 51-54.

a template that carries energy and power. The field of leadership emerged again in our American history in the fight for civil rights, with Martin Luther King, Jr. as the leader of the exodus from slavery to freedom. When the people stood shoulder to shoulder against the fierce power of the water cannons, they were resisting the enslavement of their souls. They cried out to the oppressors, as Moses cried out to Pharaoh, “Let my people go....”<sup>9</sup>

There is a particular moment during Dr. King’s famous speech at the Lincoln Memorial, which clearly elucidates the moment he is brought into the field, when he moves from the man into the field of the leader who will lead the people through the Red Sea of violence and oppression into a land of milk and honey. That moment comes when Mahalia Jackson, the singer, who is standing behind him, says to him quietly, “Tell them about the dream, Martin!”<sup>10</sup> That is the moment that propels him into the impassioned, inspired, unscripted “I have a Dream” speech. That moment galvanized the country and set into motion, not only his eventual assassination, but also the spark of liberation ignited by Rosa Parks.

That moment in history added to the field of leadership another possible response to oppression. In other countries, we see this field articulated by people such as Lech Walesa, Vaclav Havel, Indira Gandhi, and Benazir Bhutto. These are generative examples of leadership, and yet we cannot remain blind to the many holocausts perpetrated on the people by their chosen or emergent leaders. Idi Amin, Pol Pot, and François Duvalier are but some of the many leaders who have taken people from freedom to slavery, or from oppression to greater oppression. It is crucial to understand that any articulation of the field is important to the entire field; what gets articulated becomes assimilated into the field as a future possibility. It will either strengthen or diminish the power of the field to constrain the behavior in a generative way.

Returning to the story of Moses, when the people groaned to God about their enslavement, the field was constellated. The groaning set into motion the journey of the one who was destined to renew and save the people. Moses would have to go through the whole painful process of coming to relationship with God in order to serve the mandates to save the people. This process would be fraught with resistance and reluctance, and Moses would pay the price. From the Nile in which he was rescued from death, to the mountain where he received the commandments twice, Moses would have to develop the strength to carry the mandate of leadership. He would have to argue even with God on behalf of the people who consistently turned on Moses. This story from a religious tradition also illuminates what happens in organizations, both secular and religious, and in families of origin or of choice, where the

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9 Exodus 5:1 ff. (all biblical citations are from the *Revised Standard Version*).

10 Taylor Branch, *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1988), 882.

same dynamics emerge, and where the one who would serve the best interest of the collective gets attacked.

In the Hebrew Scriptures, we hear the people who have been led out of slavery complain bitterly. They protest: “O that we had meat to eat! We remember the fish we ate in Egypt for nothing, the cucumbers, the melons, the leeks, the onions, and the garlic....”<sup>11</sup> And later they lament: “Why have you brought us up out of Egypt to die in the wilderness? For there is no food and no water, and we loathe this worthless food.”<sup>12</sup> When the people would act as stubborn and stiff-necked as two-year olds, and God wanted to destroy them, Moses would argue with God and win reprieve and life for the thankless people. In the narrative, Moses goes up the mountain to receive the laws, the people despair, and ask Aaron to create a golden calf to worship. God tells Moses: “I have seen this people, and behold, it is a stiff-necked people; now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may burn hot against them and I may consume them....”<sup>13</sup> Moses intervenes, speaking directly to God: “Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people.”<sup>14</sup> Throughout the Biblical account, Moses intervenes directly with God and pays the price. The Book of Deuteronomy chronicles the countless times the people turned away from God and were saved by Moses’s intervention. No one who talks and walks with God can live as one of the collective. “Moses did not know that the skin of his face shone because he had been talking with God. And when Aaron and all the people of Israel saw Moses, behold, the skin of his face shone, and they were afraid to come near him.... And when Moses had finished speaking with them, he put a veil on his face....”<sup>15</sup> Moses not only lived apart from the people, he did not enter the Promised Land among them. That was the price he paid for leading the people out of slavery, and serving the God who had called him to be the leader to this stiff-necked people.

In *The Archetypal Field of Leadership*,<sup>16</sup> I wrote about Moses as the paradigmatic ego coming into conscious relationship with God as the process of individuation, which we know includes separation, alienation, and suffering, and requires going back to the God to get to the creative energy and destiny. But in this second visitation, I started to go backwards. Why did the people groan? Because they were enslaved. Why were they in

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11 Numbers 11: 4-5.

12 Numbers 21: 5.

13 Exodus 32: 9-10.

14 Exodus 32: 12.

15 Exodus 34: 29-33.

16 Silvia Behrend, “The Archetypal Field of Leadership,” *Depth Insights: Seeing the World with Soul* 4 (Spring 2013), <http://www.depthinsights.com/Depth-Insights-scholarly-ezine/e-zine-issue-4-spring-2013/the-archetypal-field-of-leadership-by-silvia-behrend/>.



Egypt? I went back to the very beginning of the Hebrew Scriptures and saw that at every juncture in the development of the relationship between God and humans, the field of leadership was constellated. There is a narrative coherence, which begins with Adam and Eve, who left the garden and initiated the movement towards a new mode of human consciousness. They had tasted the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil and “knew that they were naked,”<sup>17</sup> that is, that they were frail, and would face a life of struggle and strife. It continues with Noah who saved a righteous remnant from the violent and ungodly and became the progenitor of a new race. It follows with Abraham who peregrinated from place to place, slowly becoming the father of a newly made people, and then to Joseph who brought the people into Egypt, saving them from famine. We then come to Moses, who led the Hebrews out of slavery into a new land. Eventually, the Hebrew people would have kings who ruled over them, the greatest of whom was David. A millennium later, a small number of Jews would come to believe that Jesus of Nazareth, a new David, would arrive as the final biblical liberator from oppression, triumphing even over death.

This history of biblical leadership could not have been accomplished without the help of many heroic women, including Shiph’rah and Pu’ah, who, through subterfuge, saved the male Hebrew babies condemned to death by Pharaoh;<sup>18</sup> Miriam, Moses’ sister, whose dancing gave the Hebrews the courage to cross the Red Sea;<sup>19</sup> Deborah, the judge, and Ja’el,<sup>20</sup> and Judith,<sup>21</sup> who cut off the heads of their enemies to save the people from destruction. At each pivotal moment, there was collective need for movement into a new life, a new way of being, either to rebel against oppression or to create a new regime.

At each of the moments cited above, when the people faced danger, oppression, or extinction, the field of leadership was constellated and a leader emerged. What emerges from the field is constant, immutable, and, at the same time, the new iterations are based on what has come before. None of the biblical leaders could have done what they did without the work of their ancestors. Without the expulsion from the garden, there is no Abraham, no Noah, and no Joseph. Without Shiph’rah and Pu’ah, there is no Moses. Each time the field constellates and the leadership that emerges is generative, it adds to the field, and conversely, when the archetypal mandates are not navigated generatively, it adds destruction.

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17 Genesis 3: 7.

18 Exodus 1: 15-22.

19 Exodus 15: 19-21.

20 Judges 4: 1-23.

21 Judith 10-13.

The field of leadership does not mutate over time, but the mandate to navigate it generatively is increasingly crucial as our world becomes more and more complex. This is a deeply spiritual message, because the impetus to serve humanity comes from God/Psyche/Source of Being, who set the whole enterprise into motion for a very specific purpose and meaning. From the very beginning, God created humanity in order to be known, as Jung so clearly articulates in *Answer to Job*: “Existence is only real when it is conscious to somebody, that is why the Creator needs conscious man even though, from sheer unconsciousness, he would like to prevent him from becoming conscious.”<sup>22</sup> At the heart of the human experience in relationship to the divine is the necessity for an increase in consciousness, both for the sake of the human and for the sake of the God as well.

There is a deeply moral imperative embedded in the field of leadership that is at the core of human experience. The crucible of transformational leadership is the human, the man or woman who is born into the possibility of doing the necessary work to come into conscious relationship with God in order to do God’s work in the world. And what is this work besides what we have been talking about? Not just service to the people, but service on behalf of the relationship between the human and the divine. I mean specifically the raising of consciousness for the sake of consciousness. This is foundational; leadership requires that the person align to the archetypal core of service to others. The process of coming to conscious relationship with the archetypal is at its core a deeply spiritual experience—it brings one to the direct experience of God.

In *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Jung writes “Man’s task is to become conscious of the contents that press upwards from the unconscious. Neither should he persist in his unconsciousness, nor remain identical with the unconscious elements of his being, thus evading his destiny, which is to create more and more consciousness. As far as we can discern, the sole purpose of human existence is to kindle a light in the darkness of mere being. It may even be assumed that just as the unconscious affects us, so the increase in our consciousness affects the unconscious.”<sup>23</sup> In other words, what we do when we become conscious and aware of our relationship to the unconscious adds to the consciousness available in the unconscious. We transform the consciousness of the God from a less conscious to a more conscious state of Being. Conversely, a fall into more unconsciousness has the same effect of increasing unconsciousness.

This is a supremely moral issue and task, not only to live out one’s own destiny, which requires character, but also to do so in order to benefit both

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22 Carl G. Jung, *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, vol. 11 in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, trans. R. F. C. Hull (New York: Bollingen Foundation, 1975), 575.

23 C. G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections* (New York: Vintage Books, 1963), 326.

humanity and the God from which we spring. This is the spiritual dimension of what the ego has to endure in order to lead and carry the mandates of the field generatively.

The concept of “transformation” can be explored in still greater depth. The word, with etymological roots in Greek and Latin, appears in English in the *Wycliffite Bible* (1382) in connection with the “conversion” of the human person into a more perfect image of the divine, on the analogy of the glorious transformation of Moses’ face.<sup>24</sup> Thus transformation is not simply about change from one place to another, like going from the state of Washington to Washington, D.C. Rather, it is a profound conversion, from one form to another, from which there is no return. Transformation is the process of overthrowing and overcoming rigid internal and external systems of oppression and slavery, and becoming conscious and aware of who we are, what we must do, and how we must live in alignment with our destiny and with the source of our being.

Sometimes this process of transformation is undertaken by the individual as part of his or her psychic development. It is experienced as the dark night of the soul and sometimes it comes from God because the conditions demand it. A striking expression of this transformation is Saul on his way to Damascus, who was struck by an experience that completely changed him—from Saul to Paul, from a persecutor of the new initiative to one of the founding fathers of the encoded experience of encounter with the God in its specifically Christian mode of consciousness. This transformation changed him and he changed the face of Christianity.

There is another element to be added to the understanding of transformation, which is the difference between transformation and possession. Transformation is the process by which the ego comes into contact with the contents of the unconscious, i.e., God, and the ego is changed in its desire to serve God. When the ego does not submit itself, when there is not enough strength or humility to withstand the power of the God, the ego becomes possessed. Then the mantle of leadership is worn by those who serve the dark God, the disordered passions, and such persons attempt to exercise the power of God as though it were their own. History is replete with such possessed people, from Caligula to modern day dictators and perpetrators of genocides around the globe, as well as in small groups and families.

The stories encoded in sacred texts, such as the Hebrew Scriptures, express archetypal fields of how human life has been navigated both generatively and non-generatively. These stories can serve as guides and templates of

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<sup>24</sup> “And we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being changed [transformed] into his likeness from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.” (2 Corinthians 3: 18). See entry for “transform, v.” in the online *Oxford English Dictionary*.

how to live in and through turbulent times. The moral imperative is not just for the individual to have meaning and change; rather, the imperative is for each person's journey to add to the ability of the collective to achieve greater consciousness. Without undergoing pain and suffering there is no transformation, and without awareness or compassion for the pain and suffering of others, we lose sight of the moral imperative to change the conditions that stultify and destroy the souls of others, individuals and peoples alike.

Our culture denies pain and suffering; it denies the life giving and meaning-making function of becoming conscious. It is vitally important to suffer our own pain, and to allow it to transform us willingly, so that we can become the leaders that the world, our families, friends, and colleagues need us to be. Not all are called to be leaders, but all are called to live through the pain and suffering of being human. When we engage consciously with that supreme task of becoming conscious in relationship to the unconscious, we incarnate the holy. In allowing ourselves to be transformed, rather than destroyed, we may transform not only humanity, but our consciousness of God as well.