

**AN INTRODUCTION TO THE CORPS OF MARINE TRAINED  
MESSIAHNISTS!**

***(Or, How Two Men and One Woman Worked Day and Night to  
Create a Religion for the Computer Generation)***

**Mike Knowles & Milton P. Smith**

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**Mike Knowles**

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**In Memoriam**

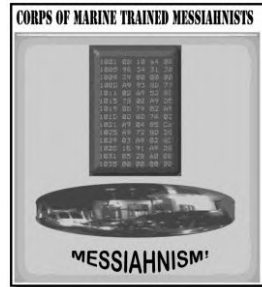
*The authors would like to thank Ms Elizabeth Tailor. Her knowledge of shorthand proved invaluable in transcribing these historic meetings. The premature demise that took her away from this vale of tears shocked us both. (Although some might argue that leaving a vale of tears was a wise move). The only consolation for those left behind is that she helped give birth to a brave new religion.*



*Figure 1: Our delightful stenographer, Liz Tailor, is photographed on Ffrith beach wearing one of her less outrageous hats.*

*For George Frideric Handel. What a great guy! He was so inspired by Messiahism he actually went to all the time and trouble to write some music for us. Even though he was deaf! Imagine that. Or was that someone else? Maybe Handel was the blind one.*

## THE BADGE OF THE CORPS OF MARINE TRAINED MESSIAHNISTS



The badge above depicts an obelisk similar to the one in Kubrick's film, *2001*. This one, however, has some mysterious computer code etched upon its surface. Messiahism was created because the author felt that most people – apart from those taking mind bending substances - are unaware that there's something wrong with reality. You don't believe me? Then try this: the Flat Earth Society may be interested to learn that we're probably living on a two-dimensional disc. Hence the image below the obelisk. This theory may help breathe some new life into their organisation. That's if the physicist who came up with it has done his sums right. Although I imagine he has because he's even managed to get Stephen Hawking to admit to it. Talk about the gift of the gab! So welcome to a religion that's based on a load of really weird stuff that just *might* turn out to be true.

I chose the retro 50's style graphics because they're a favourite of mine. They also figure prominently in one of my favourite computer games, *Fallout New Vegas*.

## PREFACE



*Figure 2: Milton P. Smith and Mike Knowles at one of their meetings in the Ffrith Hotel in Prestatyn. Mike Knowles is on the right.*

### Methodology

This book contains transcripts of meetings held between the two authors in a popular hostelry in North Wales. Here, aided by some excellent cuisine and refreshing lager, Milton and I thrashed out the basic formula for Messiahism. We felt that this was a momentous event. One that needed recording for posterity. After all, how many new religions are created every year? So they were meticulously written down by our indefatigable stenographer, the late and lamented Ms Elizabeth Tailor. A friend of the gay couple Milton was working for, Ms Tailor added a touch of glamour to the proceedings. No one will ever forget her stunning hats – colourful testaments to one of the top milliners in Llandudno.

### Please Read This!

Fans of the film, *The Matrix*, will recall that the hero, Neo, was given the choice of taking the red pill or the blue one. The red pill would lift the veil and show him that what seemed to be real was just an illusion. But, if he chose to bottle out, he could take the blue pill. Whereupon he would wake up in bed and blissfully forget everything that had happened. Messiahism gives you a similar choice. Except that you probably won't wake up in bed if you decide not to take up our offer. Consider this book to be the Messiah's red pill. And he's giving out the same message. Except it's not quite like the film. The good news is you won't wake up naked inside a high tech pod to discover that you, along with the entire human race, are hooked up to a giant battery charger. Although some of you may hanker fantasies about that. And the bad news is you won't have the powers of Keanu Reeves.

So, the choice is yours. If you decide to take the blue pill then ignore this book and choose another one. Likewise, if you're looking for a traditional religion to belong to then I'm afraid you're going to be disappointed. You may even end up bitterly

disappointed. So why take that chance? Messiahism is a religion that likes to buck the trend. For a start, it's based on science so we've had to try and remain objective. We may not have succeeded *all* the time, but we've tried to do our best. Unlike those other religions. For example, can you imagine the Pope playing Devil's Advocate with the Catholic religion and casting doubt on its teachings? I can. And the thought of him doing it in Rome's St. Paul's Square is a rather intriguing one. Albeit rather unlikely. Still, one lives in hope.

Then there's the fact that traditional religions are based on faith and belief. I regret to tell you that Messiahism's foundations are far more flimsy. Messiahism is based on mere possibility. The possibility that some of what I'm telling you could be true. And don't ask me how much of it will turn out to be true because, to be perfectly honest, we just don't know. How's that for honesty? This enables us to occupy the moral high ground over those other religions out there. Especially those fundamentalists. The ones who cling, regardless of what common sense tells them, onto the belief that every word in the Bible is literally true. Given their level of gullibility I certainly wouldn't go to them for any advice. Then there's choice. As a Messiahist you can decide which bits you agree with. You can even disagree with everything and become a heretic. And spend the rest of your life living in a cave. Or is that a hermit? So, as well as a hit and miss, Messiahism is also a pick & mix religion. Oh, and at times it's also rather wishy-washy.

### ***'MESSIAHISM! IT'S YOUR WISHY-WASHY, HIT & MISS, AND PICK AND MIX RELIGION!'***

How's that for a catchy slogan? It really rolls off the tongue.

I suppose the nearest religion to Messiahism would be *Scientology*. But we must tread very carefully here. The late L. Ron Hubbard's followers are extremely paranoid and brook no criticism of their religion, so I won't compare it to ours. We'll let you decide which one is better. And risk litigation. You need have no fear with *our* religion. Messiahism works on the 'sticks and stones' principle. You can say what you like about Messiahism. Just make sure you're not within earshot of Milton. His law firm are called Grievous, Bodily & harm.

Does it still sound interesting? Or are you about to exit. We hope not because I'm assuming if you've gotten this far then you're still interested. Well just don't get *too* excited. Messiahism merely presents you with a number of hypothetical propositions. It then leaves it up to you to pick the ones you think are closest to the truth. Wishy-Washy, Hit & Miss and Pick & Mix! Don't you just love that slogan? Of course you do!

To sum up then, we're counting on the fact that scientific knowledge will continue to

increase. And we sincerely hope so otherwise there'll be no more fantastic technological gadgets to play around with. Can you imagine that? I can't. As a result we hope that eventually *some* of our theories will be confirmed. On the other hand it may turn out that reality is far weirder than anyone thought. Including us! And that would be even better. Still reading? In that case you'd better pay for this book. You don't want us to starve. Especially not the Gunny! Hunger makes him very angry!

### **Science is the Daddy and Don't You Forget It!**

Messiahism is not *just* for the computer generation. This religion is aimed squarely at atheists and agnostics. Some of you may be asking yourselves: why would atheists and agnostics even *want* a religion? Surely that's a contradiction in terms? Surely that's the very thing they're trying to get away from. I asked myself the very same question. And I came up with a pretty good answer. Why should religion have all the fun when it comes to formulating weird, Harry Potter type theories about the universe and everything? Especially since there are branches of science and philosophy that can come up with theories that are even *weirder* sounding than the ones created by J. K. Rowling! No, it's not impossible. Just read on and you'll find out. These are theories based, not on some non-existent deity, but on the strongest and most rigorously tested of all the sciences. Theories seriously considered by some leading physicists. Science has hidden its brilliant light under a bushel for far too long. Now it's time to show religion who really is the Daddy!

On the other hand, Messiahism seeks to embrace people from other religions as well. And to anyone who may be tempted to change their theological allegiances, I have this simple message: they can rest assured that switching over to us can be a pretty painless. All they have to do is stop believing in a laid back deity who only talks to a chosen few and turns a blind eye to suffering. A deity who, his adherents claim, works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform. Ways so mysterious they often contradict the laws of logic and reasoning. A deity who asks you to replace common sense with blind faith. Once you've done that you can embrace Messiahism and we'll welcome you with open arms.

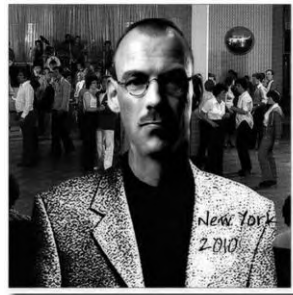
### **Messiahism Meets the Big Green Killing Machine!**

It was a chance meeting between a writer of comics and a former gunnery sergeant in the United States Marine Corps that ignited the spark that became Messiahism. A fan of the film *The Matrix*, I'd read a book that had changed my views on what we call reality. The book, written by two eminent physicists, suggested that the next great leap in human knowledge could come from outside science. It was called *The Quantum Enigma: Physics Encounters Consciousness*. In it the authors suggested that in quantum physics scientific knowledge may be reaching its limits. And they wondered if non-scientists might provide the next breakthrough. Somewhat unwisely, (in the opinion of some), I took that as a challenge. My biggest problem is that science is based on

mathematics and mathematics is a subject that's totally alien to me. Which is a serious handicap to start with. So don't expect any arcane equations. In fact, don't expect any equations at all! Some science books promise you they're so simple anyone can understand them. Yet they still stick in some numerical data. I begin to wonder if they're obsessed with numbers. It seems very likely. But only a scientist can answer that one. No, you won't find any equations in *this* book. Not even simple arithmetic.

### Looking for Answers

So what about the Gunny? Who and what is he? Well, I'll try and answer that. After being discharged from the Marine Corps Milton began looking for a job. He'd been trained as a combat journalist and a combat engineer but, neither occupation appealed to him. Instead, he decided to try his hand as a stand up comedian. There weren't many former gunnery sergeant comedians and the public seemed to like his abrasive style. Pretty soon Milton was doing regular appearances at comedy clubs in New York. But life in the Big Apple didn't appeal to him. Growing ever more dissatisfied with America, Milton decided to move to England. He'd dabbled briefly with religion, but marines are by nature pragmatics creatures and he found little solace in the Bible. But he was to find it in another religion after one of those chance meetings we like to describe as serendipity.



*Figure 3: Milton at a comedy club in Brooklyn.*

### The Man in the Iron Lung!

Whilst on holiday in North Wales, I heard about a former USMC gunnery sergeant living in a dormer bungalow owned by two gays. Having dabbled in gonzo journalism, I sniffed a good story. And things looked even better when I arrived to find the Gunny inside a makeshift iron lung. I asked him how he'd got here and the Gunny told me that it all began seven months ago. He'd been appearing at a small London comedy club when he ran into Welsh solicitor called Gordon Bennett. Gordon, who was in London to attend a meeting at the Law Society, overheard Milton arguing with the club owner. The argument was about some money Milton was owed and the Gunny was threatening to get a lawyer. Sensing he might be able to help, Gordon intervened and the owner paid Milton the money. As they were having a drink at the bar, Milton told Bennett that his savings had almost run out and he wasn't earning much as a comedian. Whilst his

acerbic style went down well in New York, English audiences seemed to resent being treated like recruits at bootcamp. So he was looking for a job.

Gordon told him that he might have some work for him. He explained that his partner, Guy, had suffered a homophobic assault a few days before in which his wallet had been stolen. Fearing further attacks now they knew where Guy lived, they'd gone to the police who said they'd keep an eye on the property. This failed to reassure them. Gordon said he'd like to offer Milton the job of minder. He could live in the spare bedroom in their bungalow.

The job would also involve acting as a bailiff. As a solicitor Gordon was often involved in debt collecting. In fact, some of his own clients were often tardy in paying their fees. Hiring bailiffs to do the dirty work was expensive and he'd been thinking of starting his own debt collection service. Milton would be perfect for the job. The Gunny had swallowed his pride and agreed to work for him. It wasn't that he disliked gays. The truth was he disliked everyone, regardless of race, religion, or sexual preferences. It was just that he considered the job of minder/bailiff to be beneath him. After all, he was a decorated war hero.

On the other hand, the two gays were more than delighted to have him. Especially after the Gunny had laid a couple of troublemakers flat and caused a third to flee for his life. He even managed to retrieve Guy's wallet. Not only that, the wallet contained double the amount that had been in it when it was stolen! Milton explained that the crook had been filled with so much remorse he'd decided to compensate Guy for the loss. When Gordon asked how Milton had managed it, Milton told him that the crook's sudden conversion had taken place whilst Milton was driving him to the local hospital Accident & Emergency department.

But then disaster struck. Having seen a number of his fellow marines struck down by Gulf War Syndrome, the Gunny had been worried for years about his health. In fact, he'd become a hypochondriac. Now, fearing his health was failing fast, the Gunny had used his engineering skills to construct an iron lung using an old boiler and other equipment purchased from a scrap yard. Given the fact that he had no experience in constructing medical equipment, it was a remarkable achievement. Milton modestly explained that a marine can do anything.

It was like the biblical tale of Jesus and Lazarus. During our conversation I mentioned my plan to create a new religion called Messiahism. And, when the nature of this religion was explained to Milton, the effect was dramatic. Roaring like a wild beast, the Gunny shot out of his iron lung like a shell from cannon. It was a sight to behold. Given the Gunny's inimical style of imparting information, I quickly decided that I'd formulate the theories and let the Gunny take care of training my disciples. It was the Gunny's idea to



create the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists who, like the Jesuit Priests, would act as the vanguard of Messiahism. They'd be missionaries working in the darkest regions of ignorance and superstition, spreading the message of my brand of scientific religion.

### **Warning!**

Before purchasing this book it's only fair to point out that Messiahism contains what is euphemistically described as 'colourful language.' In this case, the colour in question being blue. A particularly dark shade of blue. Of course, I could defend this by pointing out that the Bible also contains obscene words. But, to be fair, not as many as this! Some would describe it as gratuitous obscenity. Others would accuse me of using naughty words simply to achieve notoriety. Aware of the ammunition we might be giving our critics, I mentioned this to Milton. It was just after I'd decided to use the discussions from our meetings as the basis for a book introducing Messiahism to the masses. At which point Guy had suggested that Liz, a trained stenographer turned milliner, would be willing to help us. Given that there'd be a female present I told Milton that perhaps he should dispense with scatology or, at least, tone it down. He responded by telling me to pis\* off.

What should I have done? Theologians will rightfully point out that disciples don't normally tell their messiahs to pis\* off. I could have remonstrated with him. I could have ordered him to clean up his act. On the other hand, given that we're talking about a combat hardened US Marine, I did the only thing I could. Like Jesus I turned the other cheek.

We did, however, reach a compromise. Milton could curse all he liked as long as he spelled the offending words phonetically. Which was a forking relief, I can tell you!

### **Messiahism in a Nutshell**

Let's be absolutely clear about this. Messiahism is meant to be a religion for the computer generation. A 21<sup>st</sup> Century religion, rather than a first century one. Whilst some may applaud me for this I must be honest and confess that my motives weren't entirely altruistic. I mean there *was* a bit of altruism there. A teeny-weeny bit. A microscopic speck. No, the main reason was selfish. I'd written science fiction and the thought that I might become another Ron L. Hubbard was tempting. I you recall, he was the one who dreamed up a money spinner called *Scientology*. And I could imagine those celebrities who'd signed up for Hubbard's brand of religion diverting their attention, and their money, to Messiahism. If so I can assure them that our coffers are large and will be extremely difficult to fill.

Messiahism was inspired by a combination of quantum physics, the Oxford philosopher Nick Bostrom's Simulation Hypothesis, the enigmatic physics of dreams, and computer

games. Namely, games like *Grand Theft Auto IV* and *Saints Row 2*. Which gave me a legitimate excuse to waste several hours, (258 in one case), playing them. Although I must confess I had difficulty persuading my long suffering wife that it was merely research for my next book.

No Genesis. No snake, no juicy red apple, no Adam and Eve. Instead, Messiahism evolved from an article I wrote for the writer and anthropologist Graham Hancock's website. Entitled, *A Simple Explanation*, the article attempted to explain what happened before the Big Bang by proposing a theory of the utmost simplicity. Not being a scientist, I knew that any explanation I came up with would have to be utterly simplistic. You may laugh at my naivety, but a recent article in the *New Scientist* came up with the same theory! I'm now waiting for my invitation to have tea with Stephen Hawking where we can discuss the mysteries of the cosmos. (And I'm not talking about the stuff that grows in the garden). Just as long as he keeps mathematics out of it.

And it doesn't end there. Another article I read stated that half the universe is missing. And that doesn't include the dark matter! Losing a bunch of keys is one thing. But half the universe? That's 'mad scientist' territory. That's something the Star War's evil emperor would do. They've certainly kept it dark, if you'll excuse the pun. No headlines screaming: **MASS PANIC AS HALF THE UNIVERSE IS FOUND MISSING!** What if it was the half America was in? Or, better still, Europe? That would solve the EU problem.

Then there was the prestigious *Scientific American* which suggested that scientists have been sweeping major problems with the Big Bang theory under the carpet. I suppose we can take comfort from the fact that they haven't lost it. But you never know. As new theories are born and others discarded, Messiahism will be adjusted accordingly. This is merely the beginning of our religion. I hope Messiahism will continue to evolve as new knowledge and theories come to light. In short, as science evolves so does Messiahism. We go hand in hand, but we're not gay. The only difference being that science itself isn't managed by a writer with an overactive imagination aided by a foul mouthed former marine. Which is perhaps a pity. Depending on your point of view, that is.

I became even more intrigued when I discovered that the vacuum of space isn't completely empty. You'd think a vacuum was. But science is no respecter of definitions. Instead I discovered that space contains particles that appear and disappear out of nowhere. No one knows where they come from or where they go. Some say the police operate the same way when dealing with criminals. Of course, when I say I discovered that the vacuum of space wasn't empty I didn't mean I actually went up and found out. My bus pass won't cut any ice with NASA. Computer geeks will tell you that the action of these particles reminds them of machine code. '1' and '0.' Something and nothing. On and off. And machine code is the basic language that runs all computers. This is what

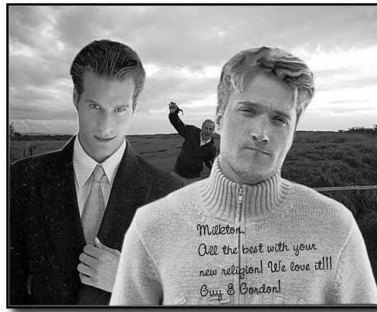
persuaded me to construct a religion based, not on a deity, but on a form of computer. An *ultimate* form of computer. In other words, Messiahism suggests we're all characters in the ultimate role playing game. But, if you dislike like that idea, then you must tell yourself that analogies prove nothing. Then you'll feel better.

But, before anything else, let's start with the Gunny's conversion to Messiahism...



# THE BOOK OF THE GUNNY

By Milton P. Smith, Disciple Instructor



*Figure 4: The gay seaside couple who employed Milton as a bodyguard.*

My name is Milton P. Smith and I was a gunnery sergeant in the United States Marine Corps. The Big Green Killing Machine. Between killing the enemies of Democracy, *McDonald's* and the American way of life, I also rotated to the Marine Corps Recruit Depot where I served as a drill instructor. Now I am still a DI. But this time I am a Disciple Instructor. My job is to teach our novices the principals of Messiahism. As a Drill Instructor in the United States Marine Corps I was paid to peace people off. That has not changed one bit. I will teach my novices to do the same. It will be their job to peace off those misguided individuals who we Messiahists classify as Religious Nuts. Those Religious Nuts will not like it. They will call on their god to strike us down. Tough titty. Because their god will not listen. He will not listen because He knows that we Messiahists can kick his ass anytime we want. My heart used to belong to Jesus, but my ass belonged to the United States Marine Corps. Now my heart belongs to Messiahism and my ass belongs to the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahists.

But it was not always so. Before I became a Messiahist...before I saw the Light, I was incarcerated in the psychiatric wing of the Bethesda Naval Hospital in Annapolis. Why was I in a rubber room? Because the shrinks claimed I had some kind of combat related stress syndrome fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan. *Hey!* That rhymes. Maybe I should take up rap! I would definitely be a meaner rapper than those candyassed self-styled gangsters. So they were gonna Section 8 me. That's a load of crap! Marines are trained for combat. Marines can take any kind of sheet Osama bin Laden throws at them. Or used to throw at them until a bunch of squids calling themselves Navy Seals popped a cap in his brown ass.

There it is. But it wasn't the Taliban who forked me up. No, the reason I was in the funny farm was because some faggot Chaplain Charley got drunk and tried to proposition me. Said he wanted to suck the cork of a Gunny. Now I was not averse to a blowjob. I was a Marine. But I am not Gay. So I remonstrated with the motherforker using my hands and

my feet. And, although he said he had forgiven me, the Navy didn't. The Navy don't like non-coms striking officers.

At first I felt guilty about hitting a priest. For a start it was just too forking easy. There's no fun hitting some peckerhead who won't fight back. But I did it anyway. What the fork was I supposed to do? Drop my pants and spread my cheeks? In the rubber room I had time to reflect on religion. And I became very cynical. I realised that religions are by their very nature sectarian. They cause wars. I figure Christianity never stopped a war, but it caused quite a few.

Maybe those priests figured that's what Christ meant when he said, 'Suffer the children to come unto me.' That Christ allowed them to use their special status as a priest to satisfy their carnal lust. We were a little worried about our youngest daughter, Monica. She was so precocious. Those short skirts she liked to wear. And the way she emulated those female singers on MTV. With those suggestive movements. Well, we asked Father Cohen for advice and he's giving her some extra religious instruction. The mother doesn't know it yet, but that extra religious instruction involves going to the priest's bedroom and demonstrating some of that seductive choreography. Boy, she's only eight but she could tempt a saint. And the priest thanks God for the Permissive Society. You like dancing, huh? Have you ever seen those pole dancers? Let me show you on this video. Later, when they're on the bed, he gets ready to give her God's blessing. Relax, my child, I'm just going to insert the Lord's holy staff into your precious little orifice. It may hurt, but remember that Christ Himself suffered on the Cross for our sins.

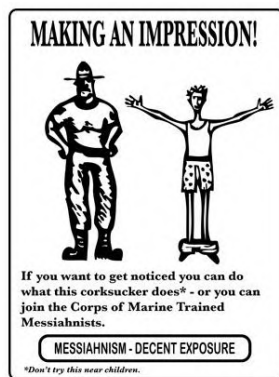
Hey! I bet you think hell is fire and brimstone, right? Some redassed dude with horns, goat's feet, and a pitchfork? Negative! Hell is virtual reality. The Devil's name is Bill Gates. So what does this virtual reality hell look like? Well, it looks like a crummy old nursing home. The place stinks of sheet, peace, and boiled cabbage. The heating never forking works and there are these big shiny corkroaches crawling all over everything. This nursing home is filled with the worst kinds of residents you can imagine. These old farts are really gross. For a start, they suffer with halitosis. Their forking breath smells like they got gangrene of the throat. On top of this, they are all in the final stages of leprosy and suffer with chronic dysentery...so you get that familiar milky white rice stool diarrhoea. Finally, they have this projectile vomiting. And you don't want to know what they bring up. Of course, this is a virtual reality hell...so these are not real people. They're just holographs. Like those in *Star Trek*. They just look, feel, sound and smell like real.

Now, most of the corksuckers who get sent to hell will be dictators like Hitler and Stalin, murderers, child killers, politicians, lawyers, the spoilt rich...the usual suspects. And when they get there they will be issued with a standard care workers uniform. Then they'll be assigned to look after these residents, 24 hours a day, for eternity. And being

sentimental, I'd like to think that these people will enjoy the challenge. After years of being pampered, they'll finally get the chance to look after those less fortunate than themselves. And the people who really suffered from leprosy and dysentery...they'll be cured and living it up in heaven. Payback is a motherforker. But that's only when it works like the Bible says it should work. But it often doesn't. Often the saints end up getting screwed.

The problem was I needed something to believe in. Before I had always believed in the Corps...I still do. Once a marine always a marine. But civilians are not marines. And I was now a civilian. And these candyasses had a whole set of different values. Forget honour and fidelity. Forget helping your buddies. In civland you only think of yourself. In civland it's the Law of the Jungle. Screw or get screwed. There it is. So what the fork was I going to believe in now I was a civilian? Wall Street was running the country and those motherforkers were only interested in making a fast buck. Then there was the problem of obesity. *Jesus H. Christ!* Why would anyone want to be that forking fat? It sometimes looked like I was at a convention for Sumo wrestlers. Eventually I decided to move to England. They too were getting fat, but at least it was a smaller country so there were fewer of them.

And that's when I discovered Messiahism...



## INDUCTION INTO THE CORPS OF MARINE TRAINED MESSIAHNISTS!



*This was our historic first meeting. During it Milton and I discussed the formation of the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahists and agreed that the organization was to be modelled on the Jesuit Priests. My wife, however, wasn't too impressed when I mentioned this to her. 'Knowing you,' she said, 'it would probably end up looking like it was modelled on the Keystone Cops.' Oh yea of little faith!*

*Milton's job in Messiahism would be to train the novices and I was sure that his experience as a drill instructor would toughen them up. Given the fanaticism of what Milton called the Religious Nuts, selling Messiahism clearly required a highly trained bunch of disciples. I also suggested that our bible could do with a dose of humour to set it apart from the others. All in all, the meeting went reasonably well with only a few distractions.*

*The sight of an Englishman and an American talking at a table would not have been especially unusual. Being a seaside resort, the locals would have been used to tourists. However, the fact that the conversations were sometimes animated and heated, coupled by the fact that a local female, noted for her flamboyant hats, was taking shorthand notes must, I think, have elicited some comments. And, after a while, word spread that we were constructing a new religion. Some wags took to shouting, 'Here come the God Squad!' when we entered. But a word from Milton soon shut them up. In fact, they turned out to be tourists like me. The locals had learned not to tangle with Milton.*

*The transcripts, as well as setting out the framework for Messiahism, also contain some autobiographical material. One day I decided to be clever and jokingly mentioned to the family that Hitler took a similar approach at Landsberg Prison when he sowed the seeds of his political ambitions. My eldest son responded by saying that was hardly surprising seeing I was born in Germany. (There's a standing joke that I could be Hitler's son and it*

*always gets a laugh.) I would have ignored such a feeble joke, but the Lure of the Pedant took over. So I pointed out that Hitler was an Austrian. And those people can never be trusted. On top of which this is a considerably milder version of Mein Kampf.*

*The meetings took place at the Ffrith Hotel in Prestatyn, North Wales, between the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2011 and the 17<sup>th</sup> July 2011.*



Are there any jokes in the Bible?



I never heard of any. Have you, Liz?



My parents are strict Methodists. They read the Bible all the time and I never heard them laugh.



Yes, but that's not to say there aren't. Maybe they just haven't got a sense of humour. I've only read bits of it so there could be some jokes hidden in there. Just to lighten the mood.



Negative. I read somewhere that the early bibles were illuminated and handwritten in Latin by monks living in monasteries. Think about it. These guys were wearing hairshirts and eating raw vegetables. Just imagine being hunched over a desk all day with a quill and some ink, scratching away at sheets of parchment. Hoping you don't make a forking



spelling mistake. Because in those days there were no rubbers.



Yes there were. In winter they used to rub each other to keep warm.



LOL. That sounds disgusting!



On the other hand the image of monks rubbing each other may be more appealing to those two gays Milton lives with. You should have said eraser. Anyway, an eraser is no good with ink. You need a correction fluid, like *Tipp-ex*.



Rubber...*Tipp-ex*...who gives a sheet? I was making a point.



I give a sheet. If you recall I told you when we first met that I was driven by the Lure of the Pedant.



*Hold it, you two!* I'm telling you right now I'm not getting involved in any of *that!*



Sit down, Liz. I'm talking pedant, not paedophile.



LOL. I knew that. I was just kidding.



Can we get back to those monks?



You seem to have a thing for them.



Yeah, I want to rub them. I want to rub them out with an M60. They may have been Religious nuts, but they were grunts. They were hard. These corksuckers spent the night sleeping on a wooden board in a damp room that makes a cell in Alcatraz look like the penthouse suite at the Hilton. Then, rising at five in the morning to pray to some God who's nice and warm in heaven surrounded by angels. Trust me. Those are not the prime conditions for creating gags.



You've got a point there. That's probably why the Bible is so serious. Far too serious for my tastes. I mention this because I think we ought to have some humour in our bible. Although it's being marketed as a religion for the computer generation, even geeks possess a sense of humour. At least I'm assuming they do.



No problem. We'll just put some gags in. It's your religion. You can put whatever you forking like in it.



Clean gags...well, clea-*nish*. Dirty jokes will tend to distract people from the message we're trying to put across.



We could even put in some mild pornographic photos. Jokes and sex are big selling points.



I know they are. But we're trying to promote Messiahism, not masturbation.



LOL.



So how are you going to open the Induction Section?



Just see how this sounds. Pretend you're one of my maggots.



Okay. Off you go.



*Attention on deck!*

The Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists are looking for a few good people. But looking at you maggots I get a feeling that the Corps may be disappointed. No problem! I enjoy a challenge. Now some of you may object to being called maggots. You may think that this term is used in a derogatory fashion. And you'd be right. It is meant to be derogatory. But there is nothing personal in this. It is simply a psychological device used in military training. One of the tools used to turn a raw recruit into a finely honed weapon of war. You maggots will also be weapons of war. Well honed weapons. And the war you are fighting will be against ignorance and superstition.

But that is in the future. As novices in the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists you will first have to earn my respect. It won't be easy. I am not one of those bleeding heart liberals who thinks everyone should be treated as an equal. Nature did not create a world where everything is equal. This world only exists in the imagination of those individuals who have no experience of the real world. Instead theses peckerheads live in a never-never land created by their candyassed philosophical, theological and sociological beliefs. These beliefs are meant for nursery rhymes and romantic fiction. They are not meant for the real world we Messiahnists inhabit.

These are the people who would have kissed Hitler's ass before he fed them into the gas chamber. We Messiahnists do not kiss ass. We kick ass. Once you have become a Marine Trained Messiahnists you will no longer be maggots and I will salute you. Until then you are just another invertebrate.

I am Milton P. Smith, your Disciple Instructor. My function is to discover if you maggots have what it takes to become Disciples in my Beloved Corps. This is not Saint Candyass's College for the Ordination of Corksucking Chaplains. This is not the Convent of the Holy forking Dildo. In order to serve as a Disciple in the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists you must be properly motivated. And I will motivate you. Let me make one thing clear, maggots. Contrary to what anyone may have told you this is not...I repeat, not a debating society or a knitting circle. When I say sheet you maggots will squat and strain. As novices you will only speak when I tell you to speak. And when you speak your first and last words will be 'sir.' Do you maggots understand? And the novices will respond with...

*'SIR, AFFIRMATIVE, SIR!'*

How's that?



Fantastic! I imagine our readers will regard this as a somewhat unusual and ingenious way of delivering religious instruction. Thus further separating Messiahism from the common herd. However, not everyone will like it. Especially those with a low self-esteem. It'll just reinforce the negative thoughts they have about themselves. It'll lower their self-worth as those psychologists like to say. Perhaps we should advise those candyasses, as you call them, not to adopt Messiahism as their religion.



Affirmative. We can quote some Health and Safety rules. And, if they do, we accept no responsibility for any psychological damage it may cause. We need to avoid litigation. Litigation is a motherforker.



Yes, denigrating the little darlings could result in whiplash of the mind! Or a fractured ego. To use the legal terms. On the other hand, there's no physical violence involved. (Unless they beat themselves on the head with their *Kindle* device). Just a lot of shouting. At worst those novices of ours will experience a severe amount of ear bashing.



You want me to hit their ears?



It's an expression. It means shouting.



Pity. But you can bet your Lilly white ass they'll hear me shout. Those motherforkers won't know what hit them. It will separate those who can hack it from those who can't. And those candyasses will be running back home so their moms can wipe the tears from their eyes.



Please keep your voice down. The landlord's liable to call the police.



Relax, Mister Peckerhead. This is Wales. The cops will be too busy chasing what you Limeys call, 'sheep shaggers.' Although if those perpetrators are wearing wellington boots they're not gonna be running very fast.



LOL.



*Ssshhh!* Your stereotyping of the Welsh won't go down too well, either. You're liable to get us banned.



Okay, keep your hair on. I will tell those maggots that there's some good news and some bad news. And the good news is I'm not a total control freak. The bad news is right now they are nothing. Right now they have not evolved from monkeys. In fact, they haven't

even reached that far. Right now they have just crawled out of the sea. That is how far down those maggots are on my evolutionary scale.



They've just crawled out of the sea?



Affirmative. They have just hauled their sorry asses out of the briny ocean. And the water is still running down their scaly sides. Right now they're merely slimy amphibians.



Your mental image of our novices is more suited to a herpetologist than a messiah.



Herpetologist? What kind of Mister Smarty Pants sheet is that?



A herpetologist is someone who studies reptiles. So these are your teaching techniques, are they? Although I'm all for it, I'm just worried that some of our novices may not have the intestinal fortitude to survive your slings and arrows.



Are you chickening out? Goddamn it! Then chicken out, you piece of sheet! You said you wanted me to act like a DI. Make your forking mind up, Mister Peckerhead. You want to mollycoddle those maggots hire someone else. I don't mollycoddle.



Calm down. I'm not chickening out. You're just the sort of person Messiahism needs. Ever since I saw Lee Ermey playing Gunnery Sergeant Hartman, the Drill Instructor in Kubrick's movie, *Full Metal Jacket*, I've been fascinated by the character. So you were a perfect choice to train my disciples.



Yeah, Ermey was gung ho. He was hard. And that's just what I'm going to be. Those novices need to know that life will not be easy because I do not give slack. Slack is for Religious Nuts and other pogues. Slack is for candyasses. There is no place for Religious Nuts and candyasses in the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahists. If they're one of these pieces of sheet then I will find them. And when I have found them I will grab their scrawny little necks and ream them a new asshole with a rusty corkscrew. They will either square away or ship out.



Gosh! If I was them I'd square away. What about you, Liz?



LOL. A new asshole with a rusty screw? Tell me more.



Maybe later. And you can bet your ass those maggots are gonna square themselves away. Next I'm going tell them that in any war the first casualty is truth. Facts can be manipulated. But we Messiahists do not manufacture facts and we will stomp hard on any corksuckers that do.





A good policy. And that means a lot of Religious Nuts are going to be in big trouble.



Affirmative. There will be those who regard Messiahism as pure bullshit. As just another crank religion. Twisting science to suit its beliefs. If those peckerheads attempt to do that, we'll put them straight. We tell them that no one is being asked to believe in Messiahism. Personally, this is not the way I'd do it. This is not the marine way. In the marines we weren't only the best, we *knew* we were the best. If it was me I'd make those motherforkers believe in Messiahism.



But this isn't the marines. We should add that if they're looking for conclusive proof there isn't any. I wish there was. Because then my mantelpiece would be groaning under the weight of Nobel Prizes. Anyway in the absence of proof, we can only hope that Messiahism might be true. Or, what's more likely, that *some* of it might be true. We're not zealots. We're not like the Amish or those other fundamentalists who believe every word in their Bible. We're not that gullible. Why do we believe only some of it is true? Because nothing is perfect. And that includes you and I. And that's a bitter pill for you to swallow. So if they think their feelings have been hurt, they must spare a thought for their DI. If I'd been anyone else you'd probably have strangled me with my own intestines!



Correction. Warm and steaming intestines. And I've seen plenty of those.



But I persuaded you to swallow the red pill. You ate humble pie.



And it didn't taste nice. But I'm a grunt. Humble pie does not scare me. I sheet on humble pie.



They don't make those pies in Wigan.



What the fork has Wigan got to do with it?



Didn't you know? That's where pies were invented. You Yanks may have given the world the hot dog, but we gave it the pie. And black puddings. Wigan is the Mecca for pie eaters everywhere.



Those candyass pie eaters in Wigan can relax.



I presume the term 'candyass' refers to someone who's weak and delicate. And not to someone whose ass is sweet enough to eat.



Jesus H. Christ! Are you telling us you like eating ass?



LOL. Does your wife know about this?



Maybe its her idea. Listen, Mister Peckerhead. What you two get up to in the privacy of your bedroom is no business of ours, right, Liz?



Can we come and watch?



*Please!* Not so loud! I bet Martin Luther or Mary Baker Eddy didn't have these problems when *they* were creating their religions. No, I was wondering what the definition of 'candyass' was.



You guessed right, Mister Peckerhead. Candyasses are weak. A good fart will blow those motherforkers down. So let me get this straight: You want me to teach those maggots that unlike those other religions out there, we Messiahnists are not peddling the absolute truth. We're peddling something that sounds as if it *might* be true.



Peddling has a used-car-salesman ring about it. It's a bit dodgy geezer. 'Preaching' will be a better description. Of course, if people want to believe Messiahnism is true then

we can't stop them. That's their choice. And good luck to them. No one is forcing them to believe. But we need to remind them that their religion is based on science and scientists tend to be less gullible than most people.



We Messiahnists don't allow magic thinking.



Exactly! We tell them that that there's no room in the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists for magic thinking. Magic thinking may have given us the *Lord of the Rings* and *Harry Potter*. But these stories are meant to entertain us.



Affirmative. This is Messiahism, not Hogwarts Academy. The only time we wave our magic wands around is when we take a peace. Or when we feel like spanking the monkey.



I don't like the sound of that. I hate animal cruelty.



I think the primates are safe, Liz. Spanking the monkey is an American colloquialism for masturbation.



LOL. Let's hope he's not going to do that now.



Yeah, I'd better not. It would frighten the goddamn women and children and make every man in here feel inadequate. Now it may come as a disappointment to some of those peckerheads, but Santa Claus is not a real person and there are no fairies at the bottom of their forking garden!



Santa Claus isn't real?



I think she's joking. I *hope* she's joking!



I am. LOL.



Okay, before we actually get down to formulating our theology, I think we need to lay some basic ground rules.



Affirmative. Because you can bet your ass there'll be some motherforkers who will argue that science should not be associated with theology. They'll try to tell us that the two should be kept separate. Tough titty! We're living in a democracy. If we want to marry science with theology then, by fork, we'll do so. Those semantic peckerheads will not like it. But there is nothing they can do about it. What are they going to do, huh?

Kick the Messiah's ass? Well, they will have to kick my ass as well. They're welcome to try. But those candyasses will have to grow a pair of balls first. They'll have to grow a big pair of balls.



And he can do it, don't you worry. One of the men he had a fight with *still* walks with a limp.



*Hell!* I didn't even raise a sweat while I was kicking their asses. They were easy meat. But I figure that's what shagging sheep does. It turns you into a candyass. We need to teach people that Messiahism is not based on some prime horseshit peddled at some forking Hogwarts style academy. And, if any of those corksuckers think it is, then this is where we part company. The next thing I will teach them is the pecking order. When it comes to religion we Messiahists are at the top of the pecking order.



The Religious Nuts won't like it, but it's a tough world. Religion is a dog-eat-dog profession. But we need to make an exception for Buddhists – don't forget that.



Buddhists, huh? You sure about that? Those people have candyass written all over them. They preach non-violence.



What are we going to do? Arm our disciples with AK47's? Trust me. Their religion is close to ours. A word of advice: just don't go too hard on our competitors. I know what you DI's are capable of. Just remember that these are enlightened times. We must try to be tolerant of others. No matter how intolerant they are of us. You can bet those

Christians will throw into our faces the fact that Jesus turned the other cheek. (I'm sorry; I just had to mix those metaphors). So a bit of humility won't go amiss.



Okay, it won't be easy for me but I guess we can manage a bit of humility. But not *too* much. Those maggots need to know that whilst we respect the Religious Nuts, we also regard them as candyasses.



And we all know who's there with us at the top of the pecking order. Scientists. Without their help there would be no Messiahism.



Affirmative. We'll tell those maggots that the Eggheads are up there with us. Why? Because they gave us science. And without science we'd still be living in goddamn caves. We'd be no better off than those swinging dick tribesmen in the Amazon.



That's right. And you need to stress that this will be a difficult relationship. It won't be one of wine and roses. During their training they'll discover that it's not easy to love those Eggheads. They may even begin to hate them. Why? Because they'll destroy many of our novices cherished beliefs. Along with the scientists, we Messiahnists know there's something fundamentally wrong with the so-called reality around us. We don't accept the status quo. We believe things could be a whole lot weirder than anyone has imagined they are. And we want to be part of that weirdness. We want science to be our LSD. Our Magic Mushrooms. We want science to be the drug that opens up our minds.



You can bet your sweet ass we do. And that is why we Messiahnists have taken the red pill. Goddamn it! We are gonna be like those drug crazed hippies. We cannot function until we have taken our fix of Messiahism.



Those are fine sentiments. But a note of caution. We need to stress that we mean this in a purely *metaphorical* sense. Not everyone will have seen *The Matrix*, so they may get the wrong message. Experimenting with chemically induced states of alternate consciousness can be rather enjoyable. But I turned my back on that some years ago. So we mustn't be seen to advocate drug abuse. Perhaps we can even sell Messiahism as an alternative to drugs!



Yeah, that's an idea. I can just see those Mexican and Colombian cartel bosses shaking in their boots. Sheeting themselves at the thought of us two toppling their empires.



Street corners filled with Messiahism pushers, handing out Kindle devices. I think that just about wraps it up for today. Let's go outside for a joint.



I take it, Mister Peckerhead, that you're not talking about a joint of meat?



What do you think?

*When Milton and I came back in after visiting the butcher, (drug slang), we christened the birth of Messiahism by wetting its head with a bottle of champagne. We were celebrating not only our first meeting but our first followers. I knew that the gay couple*



*he lived with had expressed a keen interest in our new religion. After Milton's seemingly miraculous recovery they'd told me they wanted to be my disciples. Consequently, along with Liz, they were to be the first recruits in the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahists. And I just wondered if they were up to it.*

*I wasn't being homophobic. I'd met the two men and they were both middle-class professionals. Guy Forks edited an online life style magazine and, as a hobby, regarded himself as a 'part time anarchist.' Wearing this cap he ran a blog where he advocated the non-violent overthrow of the government. There was no political motivation involved because he claimed he hated all political parties. Guy said he was genetically predisposed to anarchy because he was a descendant of Bonfire Night's host, Guy Fawkes. And that the family had had to change their name. Guy's partner, Gordon Bennett, said this was nonsense because they wouldn't have chosen a name so phonetically similar to the old one. Gordon's version was that Guy's ancestors had lived in Sheffield and that they were clearly involved in the cutlery trade.*

*My worry was this: because of their middle-class upbringing I felt the two men might find Milton's verbal abuse too much to bear. Milton, on the other hand, said they were stronger than they looked. He also told me that it was Gordon who was the real anarchist and that he'd prove to be more of a challenge. But Milton had broken tougher men before. I then asked Milton about the makeshift iron lung I'd found him in. It was constructed out of an old boiler from the scrap yard along with various pipes and hoses. And the whole thing was powered by a refurbished washing machine motor. It was an incredible example of medical DIY and a testament to Milton's training as a marine combat engineer.*

*Milton told me that the iron lung had been dismantled and returned to the scrap yard. Guy, always on the lookout for making a few bob, had advertised it in the local paper. But there were no takers. This surprised Guy. In view of the fact that many retired people settled down the area, he thought there'd be at least one person with severe respiratory problems. In a final effort he advertised it as a home remedy for asthma. Until Gordon pointed out that modern inhalers were considerably smaller and used no electricity.*

*The meeting finished at 8.30 and I returned to the caravan where the wife and I were staying for the weekend. When I told her about she couldn't stop laughing.*

**PS:** *For the benefit of the Prestatyn Constabulary, Milton and I didn't enjoy a toke outside the hotel. That was a joke. Had I been serious I wouldn't be here to write this. Milton's view of what should be done to drug addicts was so utterly disgusting it would have been banned by the International Secret Police Torturers Association. Were such an organisation to exist. It doesn't because I just made it up. So, if you're with Amnesty International, I can assure you there's no point Googling it.*

## NO CHANCE OF THAT!

*At our second meeting we began to formulate the basic beliefs of Messiahism. Inspired by what some may call false optimism, I decided to try my hand at some philosophy. My only previous foray into this murky subject had been a desperate attempt to appear clever by reading Immanuel Kant's Critique of Pure Reason. It ended in tears when I discovered I couldn't get past the first two paragraphs. Did I feel a Kant! But the temptation to philosophise proved too great and I felt that the concept of 'chance' created an opportunity. I regarded it as a paradox. Real intellectuals will no doubt pour scorn over my feeble attempts. They'll point out that this is a subject best tackled by real intellectual heavyweights. Just check out the philosophical definition of 'chance.' It's enough to make your head spin. Unfortunately heavyweight intellectuals were in short supply in the Ffrith Hotel. This puzzled me. Had they gone to ground? The place was usually teeming with them. You couldn't walk to the bar without bumping into a heavyweight intellectual who would remind you that sarcasm is the lowest form of wit.*



Today I want to talk about chance. I was thinking about it yesterday evening as my wife and I were walking along the beach. The definitions of 'chance' range from the simple to the complex. However, I know that if I don't keep it simple Milton's going to call me Mister Smarty Pants. So how does Messiahism regard 'chance?' The simplest definition is that when we say something is down to chance, we're really saying the cause is unknown. As I saw it, the problem is that when we put things down to 'chance' it creates a circular argument.



That's a *roundabout* way of putting it.



LOL



The circular argument goes like this: you can't tell why it happened because it happened by chance and because it happened by chance you can't tell why it happened. But we're Messiahnists. And we Messiahnists are not about to be fobbed by some circular argument. Am I right?



Affirmative. Circular arguments are for Religious Nuts. Those corksuckers have got plenty of circular arguments. They are living in Circular Argument City.



You give it to them, Milt. I wish I could take you to meet my parents. Then the sparks would fly.



Why? Do they produce electricity? They're not the older generation but the older generators.



*Jesus H. Christ!* If jokes generated electricity that one would need a lot of help. That one was so forking corny it would keep a thousand battery hens fed for a year.



LOL.



Like I said, but we're Messiahnists. We know *why* something happens by chance. We have an explanation. Or at least the scientists do.



Those goddamn Eggheads, eh? Just when things start to get tough they arrive just in time to save our sorry asses. So let's hear it.



Scientists tell us that unless the chance of something happening is zero, it will happen. Either now or eventually.



Yeah, that sounds pretty reasonable. So, the odds are that meal we ordered at 5.30 will eventually arrive.



I wouldn't go that far.



Look across there. Your wife and the others have just had theirs and we ordered before them.



Yeah, why can't we sit with them? That way we just might get served before we die of malnutrition.



I suggested it and my wife said they're not interested in hearing about Messiahism. That lot would rather sit and gossip about X-Factor and other boring subjects. I don't know why they got their food first. I can understand my grand daughter getting hers. She's only four. And a child's portion can't take that long to cook. Rita, the waitress, is into Messiahism. Maybe she's converted the chef and he's doing a special one for us.



Don't hold your forking breath. Check out the menu. They got beer and burger night, curry night, grill night, Mexican night...but no Messiah night.



What's on the Mexican night?



Drugs. And if you don't take 'em they chop your forking head off. Talking of conversion, we need to convert your people. How the hell's it gonna look if the Messiah's own family don't believe in Messiahism?



He's right. Maybe I can have a word with them. I'll use some of my feminine charm.



It won't work. My wife's not that way inclined.



LOL. I didn't mean I was going to seduce her!



I meant she's not interested in religion. She an atheist.



And just what the fuck is Messiahism? It's a goddamn religion for atheists! *Jesus H. Christ!* You are one sorry looking son-of-a-bitch. They need to be converted. And I don't care how you do it. And if you can't, then I will. I'll have them jumping through hoops of fire.



Okay, I'll work on it. Now what was I talking about?



You were telling us that if the chance of something happening is more than zero, it'll eventually happen.



That's right. As for myself, I'm not over the moon about it. Something like that would keep me awake. Just imagining the things that could happen. Worse still what if you're suffering from an anxiety neurosis coupled with a vivid imagination and prone to panic attacks? Then you're talking about a night spent bathed in sweat fearing the worst.



I knew he was a candyass.



The thing that interested me about chance is how did it come about? I used to lie in bed and wonder about that.



Bathed in sweat.



*Ha! Ha! Bloody ha!*



You're a married man. What's the matter with you?



How d'you mean?



I'm beginning to suspect something's wrong in your relationship.



What? I'm sorry, Liz. What did you say? Correct me if I'm mistaken, but we hired you as a stenographer, not an agony aunt.



Just answer the lady. Or are you hiding something?



Yes, everything is fine and dandy in our relationship. Why?



I'd have thought married men would have had other things on their mind when lying in bed with their wives. Unless you were wondering if there was any chance she'd let you have sex with her.



LOL. In his case I think the chances were zero.



I'm glad you're so concerned about my marriage. It makes me feel secure.





So you're not wondering what she's doing when you're not around. I admire your confidence, Mister Peckerhead. Because the sea air can turn a female into a goddamn nymphomaniac. Any sailor will tell you that. When they smell the salt water on his uniform they get weak at the knees. She could be on the beach with some – what do you Brits call them? Some Jack Tar. Remember that scene in the movie, *From Here to Eternity*? Burt Lancaster rolling in the surf with Deborah Kerr. That will probably happen a lot while you're at these meetings.



That's going to be difficult. She's dead.



No she's not! She's over there, stuffing her face.



LOL. I meant Deborah Kerr. And so is Lancaster.



The Messiah's not far behind.



I'm not even getting to get into this. And there are no Jack Tar's in Prestatyn. Unless the Royal Navy's built a base here overnight. And I didn't see any aircraft carriers this morning.



Correction! You already have got into it, Mister Peckerhead. For two reasons. First, when you said you *weren't* gonna get into it, you *did* get into it by mentioning it. Second, by making that sarcastic remark about the navy. How's that for a kickass version of the Lure of the Pedant?



Where was I before I was so rudely interrupted?



You were thinking about chance.



Thank you, Liz. I wondered how the concept of 'chance' came about. I assumed it came about to provide an explanation for an unexplained happening. And the Lure of the Pedant tells us this is a contradiction in terms. *Ah!* Here comes our food and about time, too. As for my thoughts about chance they're starting to sound a bit lame.



So what was the point of it?



There was no real point. I was just throwing up some theories, that's all. Although calling them theories is a perhaps being a bit generous. Hopefully tomorrow I'll come up with something better.

*When the meal was finished Milton told us that he wanted to buy a bottle of Jack Daniels at the local Bargain Booze before it closed. Apparently the gay couple he lived with only drank wine. Which, as you may guess, isn't the United States Marine Corps favourite tipple. I don't suppose the Royal Marines drink a lot of wine, either. Anyway I was relatively pleased with the meeting and felt sure that Milton's 'in-your-face' training methods would harden our novices and prepare them for the good fight. We could most certainly take on the Salvation Army who were military in name only. I imagine their basic training involved a lot of prayers and hugging. Ours, on the other hand, involved lots of curses and asskicking. But that only made us even more different.*

*One aspect I wasn't too happy with was my philosophical rambling about chance. As far as I was concerned it wasn't going to play a major role in Messiahism. There were lots more important issues. Unfortunately my pedantic nature sometimes leads me astray and I end up concentrating on minor issues. I call this desire the 'Lure of the Pedant.' It has all the flavour and danger of Greek mythology and ought to rank alongside the Siren's Song and Hubris. In fact, it should really have been one of the tribulations of Jason's quest for the Golden Fleece. I could imagine him and his Argonauts landing on an island adorned with lush vegetation and teeming with wildlife. And then having an evil spirit cause them to become obsessed with cataloguing every bit of flora and fauna. Which is probably what happened to Darwin.*

*But I digress. The Lure of the Pedant is a great weapon when used against people who let their mouths make statements their intellects can't cover. If you know the person doesn't have all the facts to support their argument – or you know they're making them up – then by forcing them to admit to this you gain the upper hand. The incessant request for data and the constant nitpicking will soon defeat the biggest braggarts. The usual suspects being people like politicians and what Milton and I call Religious Nuts.*

*At our next meeting I wanted to see if we could come up with some arguments against the existence of God. I was told by fellow atheists that Richard Dawkins had done a fine job in his recent book, The God Delusion. I hadn't read it because I could see it took the subject far too seriously. I prefer a more light hearted approach and I imagine there would have been very few, if any, gags in it. So I was sure I Messiahism could do something similar and lighten the mood. Of course when he wrote it Dawkins wasn't a Messiahist. It hadn't been thought of then. Otherwise he may have felt threatened by this new upstart. However, he may in time join our fold. If so, we'll welcome him with open arms. On the other hand, Messiahism doesn't entirely get rid of the existence of a deity. We simply redefine the concept.*

*Of course, the Religious Nuts will give dire warnings against taking on their Lord and Master. God's patience may wear thin and I might shuffle off my mortal coil prematurely and end up in the fiery pit. The problem of course is that if something does happen to me*

*they'll say, we told you so. In which case I'm hoping some Messiahnist will point out that if God wants to take credit for bumping me off then He'll just have to announce the fact. Otherwise he's just one of the usual suspects. Milton pointed out that if that did happen it would be great publicity. Given the number of people killed by so-called Acts of God, the deity had never claimed responsibility before. And, by singling me out, it would indicate that He regarded Messiahnism and I as a real threat to His Divine Kingdom.*

*'If you were to get waxed atheists would flock to us,' said Milton.*

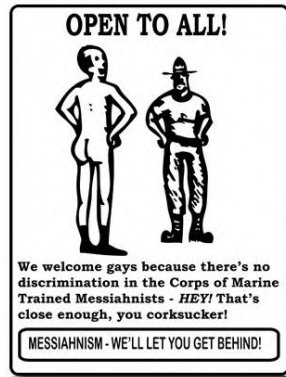
*He may have had a point. On the other hand I'd rather not be a martyr. Messiahnism wasn't that important to me. Thus distancing myself from another religious custom. That of gladly dying for one's beliefs. Milton agreed adding he'd rather someone else died for them.*

*For us atheists God's silence is golden and forces Religious Nuts to come up with all kinds of reasons why He doesn't just reveal Himself to all and sundry and stop messing people about. Some argue that He does talk to everyone, but that most people don't listen. Which begs the question that if His messages were that important He'd make sure we damn well did listen. Otherwise you could argue that He didn't really care if we listened or not.*

*The usual response to this is that God is giving us free will. This is bad news for those people He does talk to because He clearly wants them to bend to His will. As they all seem to do because I've yet to hear someone saying God talked to them but they decided to ignore Him. Their overpowering belief that this voice in their heads isn't a hallucination brought on by wishful thinking. Which means they're only too willing to be His slaves. And what does He do? He tells His slaves to convert the rest of us. Perhaps He thinks His absolute wisdom, knowledge, and powers are insufficient when it comes to salesmanship. And that we puny humans can do it better. If so, I have bad news for Him.*

*Science has also thrown some doubt on God's gift of free will. Apparently some neuroscientists claim that their experiments suggest free will may be an illusion. And, because science has so far produced far more seemingly miraculous things than God, their words tend to carry more weight. But there's still time for Him to gain the upper hand. A few lightning bolts may be in order. On the other hand, if God is trying to put His vengeful Old Testament side to rest, the raising of the dead and water into wine may shift the balance into His favour.*

*Messiahnism takes a similar view. We, too, say free will is an illusion and that we're being controlled. That's the bad news. The good news is that although we're not aware of it, we're the ones doing the controlling. Sounds paradoxical? All will be revealed, as they say, in the fullness of time.*



## GOODBYE GOD!

*In this meeting, which turned out to be another short one, we discussed Messiahism's relationship with other religions. Whilst I preferred a gentler approach, it was Milton's idea that we attack them head on. As he so succinctly put it, 'When the marines landed on Iwo Jima they weren't there to invite the Nips to a square dance!' Personally I felt that the War in the Pacific was hardly relevant to a theological discussion in a Welsh pub about the construction of a new religion. But Milton has, to put it mildly, a strong personality.*

*We also discussed the theory that our reality is merely a computer simulation. An idea that's been considered by others far more intelligent than I. However, I wanted Messiahism to come up with a new angle on it. But our most ambitious effort so far was to see if we could emasculate God. Not literally, of course, because I can't remember any suggestion that He had sexual organs. Although a student of the Bible may differ. Liz couldn't recall any mention of God's wedding tackle. She'd been forced to read the Bible as a child. The Greek and Roman deities may have been blessed with meat and two veg. But I don't think our Christian God was. After all, who would he have sex with? Perhaps the angels? But I'm sure that the Religious Nuts will say He's above such sordid desires. It would have been nice to get rid of God altogether. However, for reasons that will become obvious later, this would have been doomed to failure. As I discovered when I had my dream about Bertram Russell.*



As I was doing my research I discovered I'm not the only one who's wondered if this god the Religious Nuts pray to is a computer. There are scientists out there – philosophers and physicists – who suggest that we could be part of a computer simulation. And we Messiahists would like to thank them for their support. I want to use that theory in Messiahism. However I'd like to put our own spin on it. But we'll work out the mechanics of that at the end. What d'you think?



Sounds okay. So what are we talking about? Laptop or desktop?



The Messiahnist angle doesn't refer to a computer as we know it. I'm not talking about a machine.



That's good. If it was a laptop I wondered about battery usage time. I wouldn't want the universe to disappear because God forgot to charge Himself up.



I'm glad to hear you're still taking this seriously. We'll start by taking a look at the traditional image of God. And we can see that throughout history the superstitious and gullible, (the two go together), have always imagined He's responsible for giving us the planet we're living on. He's gone by various names and He's belonged to various religions. So it's time to bring Him into the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. It's a pretty drastic makeover. Maybe even traumatic. This is because He not only loses His name, but also His gender. Not only that, Messiahism has removed God's testicles. He can now sing opera to His heart's content.



Hear that? Mister Peckerhead talks the talk but he does *not* walk the walk. It's one thing to rip the balls off a *mythical* being and another to rip them another *human* being.



I'm not going to ask if you've ever done that. The mere thought brings tears to my eyes.



Hey! Some grunts collected ears, I collected testicles. I put them in my ball bag so we could play golf with them.



I reckon the Italians would love Him. Not Milton, I mean God. Actually the Italians would love Milton as well. Considering the number of eunuchs he's created. They could create a Phil Spector wall of sound using sopranos. As for God, the Pope could come to the opera and hear Him sing.



The Religious Nuts will not like this. But like you said, there's nothing those candyasses can do about it. They worship their God and we worship ours.



Except we haven't got one. Not yet, anyway.

*The meeting had been cut short after Guy contacted Milton on his mobile to report they'd seen some youths hanging about outside their home. Milton drove back and had a word with a group of teenagers who'd gathered on the field in front of the bungalow. He explained that although the beach was only short distance away and the sea air was very invigorating, this was not the healthiest place to be. And, when one of them was foolish enough to pull a knife, the would be assassin found himself lying face down on the ground.*

*But, unfortunately for the hot-headed lad, his problems were only just beginning. As if having a dislocated wrist wasn't bad enough, there was Milton telling him in no uncertain terms that he was going to shove that knife up the kid's ass. At this point the unfortunate thug's bowels and bladder relaxed and he was able to add soiled underwear to his list of woes. As for his mates, they'd long since scarpered.*



*Whispering in the kid's ear, Milton told him that if he or any of them came within 500 yards of the bungalow he would first break their legs and then take his time tearing them apart limb from limb. Since that particular altercation word has spread and there hasn't been any further trouble. Indeed, the two gays are now treated by all and sundry with the utmost respect. Milton had virtually eliminated homophobia from the area. As for myself, as we drove back to England I realised that any attempts to replace the traditional image of God would need to be a lot more persuasive. With our fellow atheists we were preaching to the converted so there was no problem there. It was the other lot I was thinking of. Then there was God Himself. Even though for us atheists He was merely an illusion, He was nevertheless a very strong one. Given the insults hurled at Him day and night by atheists and disgruntled Religious Nuts, He must have a very thick skin by now. As opposed to back in Old Testament times when the slightest jibe was liable to turn you into a pillar of salt. So we'd need to do a lot better.*

*But that could wait. Before I could do anything else I had to rewrite genesis...*

## GENESIS: AN ALTERNATIVE VERSION

*The Holy Bible starts with genesis, and so does ours. But that's as far as the similarity goes. At this meeting we came to the conclusion that God had taken far too long to create the universe. And we decided that Messiahism could do it much quicker. During the meeting Milton stated that we love scientists but not to the point of having sex with them. Recalling a photo I'd seen of Madame Curie and wondering if all female scientists looked like that, I tended to agree with him! Of course, there are those who will suspect our motives. Some critics may argue that we're simply flattering scientists in order to curry their favour in the hope that they'll say something nice about Messiahism. And they'd be right.*



I did some thinking about I was going to teach our version of genesis to our novices. And I came up with some ideas.



That's great! Let's hear them.



*Attention on deck!*

According to the Bible, in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. And it took God only six days to perform this miracle. Six forking days. And on the seventh God put his feet up and had a beer.

*Horsesheet.*

If it took him six days then he is no deity. He is a candyass. He is a pogue. And what is this 'In the Beginning' crap? Well, that might be fine for those Religious Nuts. Those Forest Gumps who live in the forking Bible Belt and believe that some god will save their sorry asses. But that does not wash with us Messiahists. Call us pedantic, but it raises a fundamental problem. It raises the question of what came before the 'beginning.'



That's the fundamental problem. Some physicists have said there was absolutely nothing before the Big Bang. So let's consider that. But we must get this straight. We're not talking about your everyday nothingness. We are talking about the mother-of-all-emptiness. *Nothing-to-the-power-of-nothing*. We're talking about a total absence of everything. We're talking about something that is even emptier than a politician's promise.



I don't like it. It has a Mister Smarty Pants sound to it.



Oh, dear! I certainly don't want to be labelled a 'Mister Smarty Pants.' It doesn't have a sartorial meaning, does it? Because my trousers can hardly be described as smart. Although in my younger days I did once own a pair that were sporting a rather large tartan check.



That's when you were working for the circus, right?



LOL.



I was a student. So what do you suggest?



Forget the 'absolute' bit. Plain nothing will do.



Fair enough. There's no point arguing about nothing. Get it? Arguing about nothing? Never mind. Now, it seems pretty obvious that nothing possesses absolutely nothing.



Hold it right there! Goddamn it, Liz! Did you hear what Mister Peckerhead just said? He just told us there was nothing in nothing.



Yes. You learn something new every day.



Hey, Mister Smarty Pants. Are you *sure* there's nothing in nothing?



Of course I'm sure. What the hell could be in it?



It's just that Liz and me always thought nothing was bulging at the sides. That's because there's so much forking stuff in it. Right, Liz?



Absolutely, Milton.



Sarcasm is the lowest form of wit.



Is that right? Well explaining the obvious is the dumbest form of dumb. It's dumb to the forking power of dumb.



LOL.



Alright, alright. You've raised a legitimate point, I'll grant you that. But let's not beat it to death. Why am I spending so much time on the seemingly obvious? The truth is I'm the sort of person who likes to know the ins and outs of the proverbial cat's fundamental airsole.



The Lure of the Pedant.



Precisely. And I like it because the Lure of the Pedant can really annoy people. I should have been a barrister because I'd have loved doing cross examinations. People can get really upset when you keep asking them for more information. That's probably why it's called a cross examination. But you have to make sure they don't have the information, otherwise it's you who end up with egg on your face. I want the Lure of the Pedant to become part of Messiahism.



I feel really sorry for his wife.



I very rarely use the Lure of the Pedant on her. Her temper can be quite volatile. You have to pick what Milton calls a candyass.



I have no problem with that. Peacing people off is my favourite hobby. I consider my day to be wasted if I haven't peaced anyone off. The only problem is people will start saying that Messiahnists are a bunch of motherforkers who are so obsessed with detail they can't see the wood from the trees.



I must disagree. I would reply that this shows Messiahnists are eager to get *all* the facts. In this case I merely wanted to make it clear that I'm using the word 'nothing' in its absolute sense. And this produces a semantic paradox. In fact, the only way you can think about nothing is *not* to think about it. Once you identify it as nothing, you turn a *no*-thing into a *some*-thing. Surely you can see that?



All I see is a Mister Smarty Pants who has a hardon for his own voice. So what? *Jesus H.*

*Christ!* It's not as though we're talking about anything that exists. We need to concentrate on more important stuff.



I'm sorry! That's just the way I am. I firmly believe that nothing is the mother of all contradictions. A paradox of paradoxical proportions. I know what you're thinking. Who gives a sheet if nothing *is* paradoxical?



Affirmative, Mister Smarty Pants. Who gives a sheet? You read me like a book.



I'm sorry, but as far as I'm concerned it forms the core theory of Messiahism. So we can't just ignore it. I wish we could. I've often found myself wailing that old Monty Python line, 'My brain hurts' as I tried to get to grips with this conundrum. On the other hand, religion isn't supposed to be easy. All religions contain things you have to live up to. Codes of conduct. Fasts, prayers, meditation, yoga...and Messiahism is no different. Our hairshirt is grappling with concepts like nothing at all.



You sure about nothing? The way I see it, we're gonna have Messiahists saying, 'Every week I go to our church and we talk about nothing.' What sort of message does that send out?



Please keep your voice down So what? It gives the impression that Messiahists really care about nothing. Surely you can see the awesome beauty of it?



Nope. Can't say I do. How about you, Liz?



To be perfectly honest, I'm just getting confused.



All will become clear. Just wait and see.



What Mister Peckerhead means is *nothing at all* will become clear. Isn't that right?



I once tried to imagine a state of nothing. The problem was I couldn't imagine what it looked like because, guess what? That's right. There was nothing there to imagine. The only thing you imagine when you try to imagine nothing is the act of imagination itself.



*Holy Dogsheet!* I must be going crazy, but that last bit sounds pretty cool.



I must admit it does have a certain ring about it. Just bear with me a bit longer. So what other non quality does nothing have? Well, it has no beginning and no end. This means



that nothing is infinite. Infinite to an absolute degree. Infinity to the power of infinity.



Hey! Listen up, folks! It's Mister Smarty Pants again!



You seem to have a problem with this.



The problem is we didn't cover these esoteric subjects in the Marine Corps. If we had I might have had a hardon for them as well.



No, you lot were too busy killing people. Okay, how about this? Have you ever wondered about the size of infinity?



Have I wondered about the size of infinity? *Hell!* I just can't think about anything else. Especially when I'm listening to you.



LOL.



People say it can't be imagined because it's just too big!



I could make a rude remark! LOL.



If he was talking about a cork then he wasn't talking about his own.



Really? And whose cork *would* he have been talking about?



Are you two going to listen? Or should we forget all about Messiahism and concentrate on the relative size of penises?



Keep your shirt on, Mister Peckerhead. You wanted jokes, you got them.



Okay. Saying infinity is too big to imagine sounds a pretty reasonable assumption to make. But when I examined it I found it had no substance. And do you know why?



No, but you're gonna tell us, right?



If something has no beginning or end it can't be measured. And if it can't be measured then it has no size. And if it has no size then there's nothing there. It's as simple as that. Size only applies to things than can be measured. This makes it easy to imagine infinity because there's nothing there *to* imagine. You must see by now that that there's nothing more powerful or paradoxical than nothing.



Well, I'm sure a lot of people are going to be really happy that they can now imagine infinity. They may even create Imagine Infinity Day in your honour. You finished?



Yes.



Then let's move on and talk about what the Eggheads call the Big Bang. I'm gonna tell those maggots that we Messiahnists have nothing against Eggheads or their Big Bang. We love Eggheads. But not to the point of having sex with them. Not that these people have sex. They're too busy filling their test tubes.



But what with? That's the question. Because I have this mental image of a scientist masturbating into a beaker.



LOL. You've got a dirty mind.



Yes, but sex is out. This is a religious book not the Mensa version of the *Kama Sutra*. Although, on second thoughts, given their superior intelligence those scientists could come up with some new positions.



That's not the Big Bang I had in mind. But it's a nice thought. Maybe we should market Messiahism as new ways of screwing using the wonders of modern science.



I'll go along with that.



Let's first see if it sells as a religion. But you're right. We Messiahnists love scientists. But in a purely Platonic way. And we love their Big Bang - even though it has run into some problems. On the other hand, we can see that the Big Bang Theory is a lot more scientific than the Harry Potter one in the Bible. That some Mighty Wizard conjured all this up out of nothing. But even the Big Bang has its flaws. Amongst them is the embarrassing question of what happened *before* the Big Bang. To get around this awkward fact, it was claimed that before the Big Bang time just did not exist. Time came into being with the Big Bang. I think it could have been Steven Hawking who came up with that suggestion. To use your description, the Number One Egghead. The Ostrich Egg-sized-Egghead.



I'm guessing you think that Hawking's explanation is pure nine-carat horseshit. Who's next in the firing line? Einstein?



Even scientists of their calibre are fallible. Being pedantic I ask myself how long does no time at all last? No time at all lasts for...



*Wait!* Lemme guess. I think I might know this. It last for no time at all.



Exactly. In other words if the Big Bang occurred before time it occurred in no time at all. Not only that, time itself was created in no time at all. In other words, if it was created in no time at all then it's *always* existed. And so has the Big Bang. In fact, according to this definition the Big Bang will never end. At first sight this appears to be a case of an eminent scientist allowing his mouth to make a statement his intellect can't cover. But then we discover that instead of slowing down. Which is what everyone expected would happen. The universe is expanding even faster. So the Big Bang is still with us!



So what's our theory?



That the opposite of nothing is something. This became my Simple Explanation. The Ultimate Bottom Line. That something has always existed and must always exist. Not because it was created but because of the Law of Opposites. The Religious Nuts God did not create the universe, the universe created Him. We exist because we have to exist.



Yeah, that sounds pretty simple.



Pretty simple? You're joking, right? How can you get any simpler than that? It's absolutely simple.



Simple to the power of simple.



Thank you, Liz.



You two lovebirds should get together. Mister and Miss Smarty Pants. It may be simple, but I'm betting some of those maggots will decide that the answer to everything can't be *that* simple. We exist because we have to? *Jesus H. Christ!* Is that it? Surely there must be more to it.



I'm afraid not. I was really pleased with my hypothesis. That a state of something had created this universe and any other universes that might be out there. It was the sheer simplicity of it.



Okay, so what the fork is this 'something?'



And that's when the simple became complicated. I thought I'd found a promising candidate. Energy. We're told that energy can't be created or destroyed. In my book that makes it immortal. What I needed to do next is tie this in to the computer analogy. I'd read an article suggesting that the universe was created and runs on mathematics. So *that* ties into computers. Computers are based on maths. This led me to wonder if there's a universal machine code language. One that created the Big Bang and everything that followed. It sounded great. In fact, it sounded too good to be true. Remember Douglas Adams?



The guy who wrote *Hitchhiker's Guide to the Universe*?



Yes, that's the one. He came up with a computer called Deep Thought. And this computer had the answer to everything. Maybe we've done the same. Okay, I think we should wind it up for today. We've covered quite a lot of ground and I'm starving.

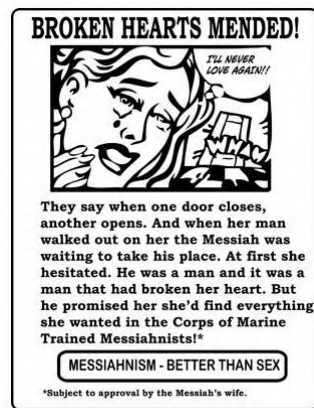


How can we have covered quite a lot of ground when we've been talking about nothing?



She's getting quite good.

*You'll have noted that this version of genesis is very similar to the one I expressed in A Simple Explanation. With a few added refinements. But, at the time, I still wasn't entirely satisfied with it. Calling what has always existed a 'something' was far too vague and ambiguous. The Lure of the Pedant demanded a more precise description. On the other hand, if Eggheads like Stephen Hawking were stumped by what caused the Big Bang and what came before it, what chance had I? I recall a teacher once telling me that if brains were dynamite there wouldn't be enough to lift a lock of my hair. And I began to wonder if it was all worth it. On the other hand, history shows us that prophets of all religions have never had an easy life. Apart from Buddha, of course, who apparently just sat around contemplating his navel and getting clinically obese into the bargain. At least that's the message those statues are giving out. Had he been alive today he would have been counselled on the benefits of healthy eating and exercise. Although he probably wouldn't have heard anything because he'd be meditating. Actually, Buddhism is the only religion I have any time for. Firstly because it preaches non-violence and secondly because the Dali Lama himself said that his religion bears a resemblance to quantum physics. This, of course, automatically makes him an honorary Messiahnist! So we can add yet another famous name to our religion!*





## BEWARE OF RELIGIOUS ZEALOTS!

*This was yet another short meeting. Either I was just too lazy or this concept was so difficult I couldn't handle it. It could also have been the fact that it was summer and we were close to the sea. The prospect of lounging in the beach was proving irresistible. However, on this occasion it was Karaoke Night at the Ffrith Hotel. During this meeting we discussed ways of dealing with religious zealots of all denominations – apart from Buddhists, of course. And Scientology because we didn't fancy the prospect of litigation. Oh, and there was another religion that found it difficult to accept criticism. One also connected with a Big Bang.*



I was thinking about those other religions. How they create zealots. I'm referring to those over-zealous Religious Nuts who either want to badger you to death converting you or just want to blow you up. Which is a lot quicker. But a drain on personnel. We certainly don't want people like that in Messiahism. And we need to warn our congregation about them.



There's not much we can do about the suicide bombers. Those individuals are immune to any form of rational dialogue. Before or after. But those Christian evangelists are a bunch of candyasses. We can deal with those motherforkers. I'll tell the novices that Religious Nuts are a nervous bunch. That these individuals are not only scared of the Devil, they're also scared of their own deity. And when their missionaries attempt to convert us to their magical thinking we will humiliate them.



That sounds cruel.



*Bullsheet!* We're being cruel to be kind.



And just how do you work that one out?



We're being kind to ourselves. Because we enjoy being cruel. And they're Christians. Once the red mist has gone those corksuckers will forgive us. But we're not savages. We will use logic and reasoning to humiliate them.



You're right. Using logic and reasoning to undermine their message is by far the best method. And, to avoid creating our own zealots, we make it clear to our congregation that we haven't discovered any fundamental truths. All we've done is produce some hypothetical theories. Ideas of what might be. Not what is. Whereas religious zealots preach blind faith, we preach healthy scepticism.



Negative. We could create our own zealots. Sceptical zealots.



I don't think that would work. If they're really sceptical then they're going to be sceptical about their own zealousness. They're not going to be as dedicated as those others.



You got a point. Telling people that some of their religion may turn out to be pure bullshit doesn't have the same impact. The way I see it, the biggest problem will be the pedantic zealots. The ones, like you, devoted to the Lure of the Pedant. They could cause a lot of trouble.



I never thought of that! And you're right. Hordes of argumentative people roaming the streets causing problems. Not that this'll worry the police. Not at first, anyway. Because they're used to that sort of thing at the weekends when the night clubs empty. But just wait till they find out these people are Messiahnists!



Know what I'm gonna do? I'm gonna instil some Lure of the Pedant fundamentalism into my maggots. Those Religious Nuts will learn to fear the Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists. Hear that? The music's started.



Yes, Come on, Liz. Put that pen down and get up there. You do a great Beyonce.

*Liz was a gifted impressionist who could emulate a whole bunch of famous singers. The children particularly liked her Michael Jackson. Which was a bit worrying. It was a good job she didn't do Gary Glitter. I didn't join in the singing. For purely aesthetic reasons. I've been told that whenever I attempt to sing I sound like a cross between a constipated cow and a chain saw. I admit I'm no crooner, but I do think that description is a bit on the harsh side. Nevertheless, my wife believes it could damage the ears of anyone within a 10 foot radius. It certainly has some remarkable effects. The cochlea inside the ear is spiral shaped. My voice can straighten it. And it doesn't shatter glass. Instead, it has the opposite effect. It actually tempers it to almost bullet proof quality. As a result my wife*

*encourages me to sing to my heart's content whilst she's out of the house. This gives us crockery strong enough to survive a force nine earthquake. So, whilst she and the others were warbling away, I spent the time trying to add more detail to Messiahism's version of genesis. And with all the noise that wasn't easy.*

## GENESIS: AN ALTERNATIVE VERSION (PART 2)

*At this meeting Milton and I became embroiled in a number of tricky paradoxes. Or at least it certainly seemed like it. On the other hand, this could have been down to the excellent Sunday lunch followed by a couple of pints of strong lager.*



When I was thinking about genesis, one theory I came up with was that nothing was unstable.



*Jesus H. Christ!* I thought we'd finished with nothing.



We started with nothing and it would be a pity if we finished with nothing. LOL.



Not if Mister Peckerhead is talking about genesis. Because on that he started with nothing and finished with something.



When you've both had your bit of fun maybe we can continue. What I *was* talking about was instability. And that this instability causes something to exist. So that as soon as a state of nothingness occurs its instability causes it to collapse and turn into somethingness. This is similar to what happens to particles in quantum physics. But, not being a scientist, I couldn't work out what that instability could be. What could there be

in nothing that could be unstable? A difficult question to answer when you consider that there's never been nothing in nothing.



That's rather catchy. Right, Liz?



LOL. It has a definite ring to it.



There's never been nothing in nothing. Maybe we can set it to music. Liz can go on *X-Factor* and sing it.



And I'll put nothing into it. LOL.



Considering some of the corksuckers who appear on that thing she could even win it.



So, in the face of that impossible paradox, I dropped the idea. Then I saw an article on the problems of existence. And one of the questions they were trying to answer was how something could be created out of nothing.



Our Messiah has already done that, hasn't he?



Goddamn right he has. *Holy Dogsheet!* Those Eggheads could have saved themselves a lot of trouble if they'd known the Messiah was on the case. Maybe we should ask them to check with us before they publish any research. You do *remember* we covered this, don't you? Because we could be looking at the onset of senility. They say the memory goes first.



Who does?



**Milton:** I can't remember.



LOL.



To my delight, the article also came up with the instability theory. Only, unlike me, they came up with a reason *why* nothingness could be unstable.



Hear that, Liz? That's why we love Eggheads. Because they break their asses trying to help the Messiah.



It's a nice thought, but I'm sure they don't just do it for my benefit.



*Bullsheet!* That's the message we need to send out. That we rule the roost, not those goddamned Eggheads. Don't go candyassed on me.



No, we need to keep them on our side. Not antagonise them by bruising their egos. We're going to upset the Religious Nuts of every religious persuasion, so we need some allies. Einstein and Buddha will do just fine. Anyway, there was some other stuff in the article that was analogous to computers. More good news because we've established that computers figure prominently in Messiahism. It wasn't *all* good news, however. There was one particular article that was rather disturbing. Then I decided it could be adapted to Messiahism. It's bound to create some controversy.



Controversy is good publicity. What the fork is it? It's not about reality created by some alien computer, right? We're not part of some ET's goddamn *X-Box* game. We're not puppets on a string. Because if we are that would *really* ruin my forking day.





No, it's not quite *that* bad. Depending on your point of view, of course. But we'll get to that later.



We're counting on you, Mister Peckerhead. Because if you don't deliver then I'm back in that iron lung. Only I won't be the only one strapped to some medical gizmos. And those doctors will be wondering just how the hell they're gonna get your head out of your ass without killing you. So what was this instability in nothing they came up with?



Symmetry.



I heard of that. It's where they bury dead people, right?



LOL.



Ladies and gentlemen, may we present Messiahism! A prayer and a joke!



Symmetry. I love it.



Symmetry in this case refers to a precise state of balance. The scientists say that nothing contains perfect symmetry. That's because there's no way of telling one part of nothing from another.



I wonder how long it took those peckerheads to figure *that* one out. Eggheads just love making the simple look complicated.



Whereas Messiahism seeks to make the complicated look simple. The article raised an interesting point. It went on to state that quantum physics – which we'll cover later – hates symmetry. And it hates emptiness. Consequently, we're told that the vacuum of space is filled with particles. And these particles just pop out of nowhere and disappear into nowhere. In fact, according to our Eggheads, the entire universe is filled with these particles popping in and out of existence.



You gotta be kidding me.



That's what they say.



*Jesus H. Christ!* The universe is a popcorn machine!



That would be really great! In which case those scientists can forget spending money on particle accelerators. Stephen Hawking can retire from theoretical physics and take up stamp collecting. God is in a cinema watching a film and we're in his bag of *Butterkist!*



What flavour?



Toffee.



I'm not that keen on toffee.



That would show the universe wasn't created for your benefit. It was created for toffee lovers everywhere.



So what other theories did these popcorn loving Eggheads come up with?



The article mentioned another theory I'd considered. That's when I suddenly felt a pang of paranoia. I knew these Eggheads were brilliant – but had they *really* devised a machine that could read my mind?



I could be wrong, but I think they got better things to do than read your mind. Which wouldn't be too difficult because there's nothing in it. Apart from these toffee flavoured particles that keep popping in and out.



Be careful. Comparisons are inherently invidious. The article suggested that one explanation may be that nothingness didn't exist. I think that's an oxymoron, right? When you stop and think about it there's nothing there than *can* exist. The Lure of the Pedant leads you to the conclusion that you can't apply the term 'existence' to nothingness. It's so obvious – which could be why these Eggheads missed it. So now we have a bottom line. Something must exist because nothingness cannot exist.



Hold it! Haven't we already done that? I seem to remember we covered something similar in your first version of genesis. I'm starting to worry about your mental state. You're not getting any younger.



I think I based it on the Law of Opposites. The opposite of nothing is something, so something must exist. We exist because we have to.



I'd have to consult my notes. But I think he's right.



Anyway it doesn't matter. This is just a different angle. If I'd known that constructing a religion was going to be this complicated I'd have given it a miss.



Yeah. You should have realised it wouldn't be *that* forking easy. Let's face it, what the fork do you know about science and religion? What the fork do any of us know? Okay, you wrote some science fiction. Like Hubbard. And look what he came up with.



Careful. This is *Scientology*. They have short fuses.



Big deal. I'm sheeting in my pants. Those corksuckers don't scare me. What are the fork are they gonna do? Get John Travolta to dance on my face? No way, Jose. Never happen Mister Twinkletoes must be old enough for a retirement home. Yeah, I bet he's sitting on the porch in Florida with the other old farts, telling them about the time he danced in the movies. But you're different. You were also a gag writer, right? That will definitely get you a degree in theology. Because religion is just one big joke.



Apart from Messiahism.



Negative. We got jokes as well.



I know! Let's think of some more jokes we can put in. How many times did Jesus tell jokes? Because life must have been pretty hard in those days. They didn't have television or computers. And very few labour saving devices. Apart from slavery. Are there any of His stand up comedy routines in the New Testament? Did he raise Lazarus with some jokes? Or cure the leper? He could have done. After all, they say laughter is the best medicine...



Unless you choke to death laughing.



Yes, but thankfully those are exceptions. No, there are no jokes in the Bible. I'll tell you what. I defy any theologian to find me one joke in the Bible. Just one.



You're in luck. This is the Ffrith Hotel. It's gonna be full of theologians, right? I mean, where else are those corksuckers gonna go on their holidays?



Very funny.



Okay, let's have some jokes. You're the Messiah. You kick off.



I think I've got one. Remember that theory of mine that the universe was created by a form of yet undiscovered energy? Imagine if it turned out to be true. If the God they worship is really a form of electrical energy. So instead of a church, those Christians should be praying in a power station. One generation praying to another. *Generation*, get it?



And they go around wearing *turbines*.



LOL. Milton's was better.



Yes, he was *currently* ahead of me on that one! And they'd have to *pylon* the pressure when saying prayers.



Good one!



There'll be *sparkling* places outside every church.



LOL. Stop it, you two! This is too much!



No can do, Liz. We're on a roll. As the lettuce said to the ham. How about you, Liz?



Cain and Able will be *currently* renamed Cable.



*Holy Dogsheet!* We're plumbing the depth of comedy here. I've read better gags in fortune cookies. Maybe we should cut our losses and concentrate on teaching those maggots about Messiahism.



You're right. *Watt's* done is done. I think we've given those jokes a *plug*.



You finished? Good. So with energy you thought we've found the Holy Grail. The one Christ had his coffee in. Christ's *Latte* Supper.



Christ's *Latte* Supper. You can *milk* that one for all its worth. Yes, it certainly seems like



the Holy Grail. But we need to think about that a bit more. And at this point we could bring in Nick Bostrom. If you recall, that's the philosopher who suggests we might be living in a computer simulation.



That's why we love Eggheads! The Religious Nuts had plenty of Harry Potter stuff they can sell to their congregations. Until we came along.



Yes, and that's what we atheists were missing. All we had was science. And we all thought that science was just boring.



Thank God for Eggheads!



Spoken like a true a true atheist. Okay, we all know about the virtual realities created by computers. Virtual realities that often seem indistinguishable from the reality outside. In view of this it's therefore legitimate for Messiahism to ask the question: is the so-called the real world just one that's been manufactured for us?



Hold it. We're getting into puppet-on-a-string territory here. My name is not Pinocchio. Some Egghead tries to tell me I'm in a computer game I'm gonna rip his lungs out. I'm gonna shove a dead porcupine up his ass without the benefit of a lubricant.



That produces a rather disturbing mental image.



Is that so? Not to me. How about you, Liz?



Does it have to be a dead one?



Affirmative. That's because no living porcupine deserves to go up their asses.



We could remind the Religious Nut that Bostrom's simulation hypothesis is based on some pretty strong arguments. On the other hand, whilst I agree that our reality could very well be a simulation, I don't believe that we're part of a game of *Sims* created by a superior intelligence.



Neither do I. That would just be another form of Intelligent Design. And Intelligent Design is a dirty concept to us atheists.



I must disagree with your opinion of the 'puppet-on-a-string' theory. This just happens to be an integral part of Messiahism. So you'll just have to bite the bullet on that one. I suppose you marines are used to biting bullets.



Yeah, we used them instead of chewing gum. But if you think I'm gonna roll over and call myself Pinnochio, think again, Peckerhead! Read my lips: It's not gonna happen.



Very well, we'll leave that for the moment. At our next meeting I think I'd like to tackle the question of time. Some scientists think it's merely an illusion. So want to try and tackle time at our next meeting. What d'you think?



Yes, if we have time to do it.



Hey! It looks like we got ourselves another joker.

*At this point we were interrupted by a clergyman who came over to say hello to Liz. I immediately sensed trouble. He was in his mid-50's; a thin, grey haired man of medium height. And his hard and uncompromising expression suggested he was one of those clergymen who enjoyed giving fire and brimstone sermons. He'd have made a great Puritan in Cromwell's day. Liz introduced him as Ellwyn Jones and explained that her parents belonged to his congregation. 'They're the pillars of our community,' the clergyman added. He went on to express his disappointment that Liz seemed to have fallen by the wayside. Liz told him that we were creating a new religion and Jones looked startled. This was not the sort of activity one would normally associate with the Ffrith Hotel. Because it was a Sunday, I imagined he'd come in to warn about the evil drink. And then remind us to attend the evening service otherwise our souls would be in mortal danger. When he'd recovered from his surprise he told us that in the old days such a*

*thing would have been regarded as heresy.*

*'In that case we'd better make a run for it,' Milton said. 'Before these sheep shaggers burn us at the stake.'*

*For a moment I thought Jones would have a fit, but he merely laughed nervously. I then remembered that the Gunny's reputation had spread far and wide. Especially the story about how he'd beaten a Marine Corps Chaplain to a bloody pulp. Clearly a dog collar was no deterrent. Looking worried Jones cleared his throat and reassured us that we were in no danger.*

*'Phew!' said Milton, pretending to wipe his brow. 'That's good news.'*

*Ignoring the sarcasm, Jones explained that these days the Church accepts the fact that people may have different ways of worshipping God. I explained that this didn't apply to us because we were all atheists. Jones' face darkened. This challenge to his faith persuaded him to throw caution to the winds and he told her he was sorry to see her in such company. He then asked her why she'd forsaken the Lord. This proved too much for the Gunny.*

*Before Liz could answer, Milton asked Jones if it was true that God had created the earth and everything on it.*

*'Of course it's true!' replied Jones.*

*'And that,' said Milton, 'is why we're atheists. If this is the best God can do, then it's clear the peckerhead just isn't up to the job.' He then went on to explain that his cousin Reuben could have made a better job of creating the earth. And he was a forking retard with a mental age of nine. Looking like he was about to have an apoplectic fit, Jones stormed out of the pub.*

*'I'm going to get a lot of stick from my parents,' Liz observed.*

## THERE'S NO TIME LIKE THE PRESENT

*At this meeting I attempted to deal with the concept of 'time' and decided that Einstein was a great seducer. I imagined Einstein's method of seduction to involve asking females to his flat to look at his equations. Liz pointed out that Einstein had a sense of humour. To which Milton replied that he'd never have made a successful stand up comic because only twelve men in the world would have understood his jokes.*



I think we should try and get rid of 'time.' It's a nuisance.



Yes, but is this the right time to do it?



Not you as well! Liz already told a similar joke. And hers was better.



*Hey! We may need all the jokes we can get to sell this motherforker! Getting rid of nothing was easy. There was nothing to get rid of. But getting rid of time? That's not gonna be as simple. Time is a grunt. He's not going to lie down and spread his cheeks. Without time you're in big trouble. Try catching a train. Or cooking a meal. Take away time and you really *are* in a World of Sheet.*



Time spreading its cheeks produces a rather disturbing image. I had toad-in-the-hole for

tea last night.



It wouldn't produce a disturbing image for Guy and Gordon. It would give those two corksuckers a hardon.



Can we please concentrate on the subject in hand. So, what do we know about time? We know it rules our lives. And we know that the railway companies can never seem to get to grips with it. Their timetables say one thing and the clocks say another.



Mussolini managed it. They say he got the trains running on time.



I think we're going off the tracks here.



Keep those jokes coming. We need them. The Big Chief of the Eggheads had a hardon for time. I'm talking about Albert Einstein. He was a seducer. His Theory of Relativity gave those Eggheads the hots. They probably masturbated whilst chanting. 'Energy equals mass squared by the speed of light.' He even made the earth move when they used it to create the atom bomb. Sex and science. They go together like a horse and carriage. And he had some weird ideas. I remember reading about the speed of light. He said that if you were going at the speed of light everything would come to a stop. Because nothing can travel faster. Yet. But the jury's still out on that one.



Ironically, the same sort of thing happens with time. If you could observe infinity time would stop. There'd just be permanent state of 'now.'



*Hot dog!* Lemme get this straight. Does that mean if you were screwing a woman it would go on forever?



*Wow!* LOL.



I had a feeling you were going to bring sex into it. That's all you marines ever think about. Killing people and having sex with them.



Before or after they kill them?



Okay, I'm going to rephrase that. All marines think about is killing people *or* having sex with them.



Lure of the Pedant, Mister Peckerhead. You said marines having sex with *people*. Does that mean men *and* women?



This is a wind up, right? Sorry, I should have been more specific. I meant women.



Thank your lucky stars. You just avoided a severe beating. Sex and gags are two of the biggest selling points.



I'll *bare* that in mind. *Bare*...naked? Forget it.



Anyone seeing *you* naked would *need* to forget it!



LOL.



Anyway, I've given the problem of time some thought and I begin to wonder if it's all worth it. You try sifting through reams of often incomprehensible scientific data looking for inspiration. What I wanted was that Eureka moment when everything comes together. Archimedes did it. In desperation, I even tried lying in the bath. But, like him, all I discovered was that the weight of my body displaced an equal weight of water.





So what the fork are you saying? Messiahism is finished? That I'm going to end up back in the iron lung?



It would give you some breathing space.



You are one funny son-of-a-bitch.



Then I decided I'd come this far so I may as well try and see it through. Reflecting on the problem of time I realised that there's something even more important. Or, for that matter, more important than anything else we've discussed. Something so important nothing can exist without it.



Sounds interesting. What is it?



Awareness. And we'll tackle that one tomorrow.



That's because you're gonna have to get some first, right?



LOL. You two are really funny. Why don't you forget religion and start a double act.

*Later, over lunch, I told Milton and Liz it would be great if Messiahism got rid of time altogether. What an achievement that would be! I own a humble Timex so it would be no great loss to me. It's the owners of the top brands like Rolex, Omega, Patek Phillippe and Jaeger le Coultre that have the most to lose. But then they shouldn't have been so posh. Milton disagrees. The biggest problem is that I'd be cutting my own throat, as he so graphically described it. The point being there'd be no time to finish this book. Yet another reason I regret ever having created the Lure of the Pedant.*

*I decided to compromise. Messiahism will teach that time is merely an illusion, albeit a necessary one. Some physicists share the same view and if anyone's interested they can take a look at what they say. But it's all highly technical stuff. Me, I spent the afternoon grappling with the technical skills needed to build sandcastles. Having a competitive nature, I wanted to see if I could make a better one than my four-year granddaughter. And you can imagine what happened.*

## KNOWLEDGE!

*Due to family commitments this was yet another short meeting. During it I proposed a thought experiment and Milton made a lame joke about the Rolling Stones. Then we became embroiled in what my wife later described as a totally ridiculous philosophical argument.*



You were gonna talk about awareness today. Which, in your case, is like a restroom attendant talking about rocket science.



Very funny. Yes, awareness. Which is synonymous with 'knowledge.' To know something is to be aware of it.



*Whoops!* Here he goes again.



You don't say? *Jesus H. Christ!* We're really getting an education here, Liz. Who the fork would have guessed that you need to be aware of something to know it. Did you know that, Liz?



I wasn't aware of it, Milton. Until the Messiah here brought it to my knowledge.



I'm trying to construct a religion here.



Okay, I think I knew what you're getting at. But make it simple. Right now you're in danger of becoming Mister Smarty Pants. The fact that Messiahism is based on science doesn't mean we're supposed to be like those Eggheads. The ones who sit on their fat asses like a bunch of overeducated Buddhas contemplating their intellectual navels.



*Bloody hell, Milton!* Couldn't you get any more metaphors in there?



I guess I'm just greedy.



You said a while back that we love Eggheads. In your case that means tough love, right?



Affirmative. I don't intend to hug those corksuckers. Neither am I going sit around with them holding hands and singing kumbaya. If you want to kiss their asses, go ahead. They may have a bigger IQ than me, but in my book they're still pogues.



Pogues? Being what?



A rock band.



Pogues are those candyasses who serve in the rear echelon. They are not grunts. They are not hard.



Okay, Milton. Are you ready for a thought experiment?



What the fork is that?



It's a cheap and easy way of conducting an experiment. You don't need any expensive equipment. Just your brain. You come up with a problem or a theory and you see if you can think your way through it. Scientists often conduct thought experiments. Theoretical physics is a series of thought experiments. They create equations and other physicists test them out in their laboratories. This is Mister Smarty Pants territory so you may not like it.



*Holy Dogsheet!* Are you saying I can't use my brain? Because if you are I'm gonna use your head as a BB gun.



LOL. How will you do that?



I'll squeeze the motherfucker so hard his eyeballs will pop out. You want a thought experiment? Okay, let's have one.



I wasn't suggesting you couldn't use your brain, Milton. After all, you went to college and you were a journalist. Okay, I want you two to imagine a stone. Now I'm sure you'll agree that it's highly unlikely that a stone is aware that it exists.



Unless it's one of the *Rolling Stones*.



She's got you there, Mister Peckerhead. You should have been more specific. You need to remember the Lure of the Pedant.



He's right. 'Stone' is ambiguous.



Okay, I'm not going to lose my temper. And I confess that in order to avoid any misunderstanding I should have made it crystal clear that I wasn't referring to any of the Rolling Stones. Are we all satisfied? On the other hand, at their age – given their history of drug abuse coupled with the inevitable onset of senility – I doubt if they're aware of anything at all. However, in this case we're talking about a *real* stone. And, although it's not aware of its existence, the stone exists. Why does it exist?



Why does it exist?



Yes.



Do I look like a forking geologist? Let's see. Billions of years ago, when the earth was forming, there were these volcanoes erupting all over the place...



Oh, dear. I forgot the Lure of the Pedant again. Before we go through each stage of the earth's development, let me assure you that it has nothing at all to do with geology. It's much simpler than that.



Simpler?



Yes. Try human beings.



So it *is* one of the Rolling Stones.



No! We know the stone exists because we can see it. We're aware of it.



What about blind people?



I'm beginning to like her more and more.



If they trip over the stone they'll be aware of it. If not they won't be aware of it. Now imagine there we were *no* human beings on earth to observe it. We could argue that other living creatures will observe the stone. True. But there's just one problem with that. Freddy the Frog, for example, doesn't know it's a stone he's sitting on. Only *we*



know the frog is sitting on a stone. Here's my point: if we didn't exist then neither would the stone. Or the frog. Or anything else for that matter. In fact, the entire universe wouldn't exist. Because there'd be no one to describe it.



*Bullsheet!* Those things will still exist but without our knowledge.



I agree with Milton.



Yes, but don't you see? If *we* didn't exist how would we know that? Without humans who are able to observe and describe the universe it may as well *not* exist.



What about the other living creatures? They'd still observe it.



You still haven't got it. Concepts like existence, knowledge and awareness are part of the language *we've* created. Not Freddy the Frog. Without language there's be no such thing as existence, knowledge, or awareness. Take a cow that's chewing the cud. The cow isn't aware that there's such a thing as a cud or that it's chewing on it. It isn't even aware it's a cow. The concept of existence is alien to it. It 'exists' because we created the concept of existence. If we never existed there'd be No Big Bang, no universe, and no cows chewing the cud. But we do exist. We exist because we had to exist.



So we created cows and frogs. They should be forking grateful to us. The cows are. They give us milk, meat and leather. What do the frogs give us? Jack Sheet.



By being aware of them and identifying them we *have* created them. But it may go even deeper than that. The strongest and most rigorously tested science suggests that we create the universe by observing it. And that's one of the messages Messiahism will send out.



LOL. You're making me feel like a goddess!



You look like one!



Right! That's it for today.

*The fact that knowledge requires awareness is a no-brainer as any self-respecting philosopher will soon tell you. But I'm not a philosopher let alone a self-respecting one. And any in depth discussion about awareness would simply go over my head. At this point you may be asking yourselves why do I bother? If this thing is clearly too much for me why am I attempting to create a new religion? Especially one based on science. It'd be like a plumber writing a book about the human digestive system. The clue is in the title, A Simple Explanation. In Messiahism the emphasis is on the simple. The bottom line. This is a religion tailor made by the shallow minded, for the shallow minded. And how many religions out there can make that boast? Of course, Messiahism can also*

*cater for intellectuals who simply want to wind down. If you spend your working day thinking, it's always nice to relax with something that requires the bare minimum of thought.*

*I like thought experiments. And I was rather proud of the stone one. It had a solid feel about it. Get it? By the way, some of my puns produce such loud groans that I suspect they might be giving people an orgasm! And what if they did? Women would find it a bit embarrassing. But what about the men? There's a thought experiment for you! Some guy who thinks he's straight ejaculates after I tell him a corny joke. What's he going to think? As for me, I'd have to ask any gay men cover to cover their ears just to avoid any embarrassing misconceptions.*

*Anyway, I decided to create a few more thought experiments along the way. I could then imagine I was like Einstein and the others who used them to solve tricky problems.*

*Some of you may be wondering if I did manage to build a decent sandcastle? Well, that depends on your definition of 'decent.' Mine, for example, is a pretty broad one. As a child I only managed to master the skills required to construct your basic, single turret, model. The one that requires you to fill the bucket to the top with damp sand, tap it down with the plastic shovel, and upend it. A skill I've managed to retain into adulthood and old age. So that I have at least something I can feel proud of. As for Messiahism, my initial enthusiasm was beginning to wane. Would I ever get it done without having a total nervous breakdown?*

*You'll just have to wait and see.*

## BE AWARE!

*What can I say? A really surreal meeting during which I began to wonder if I was the only one who believed in solipsism.*



Before we start I should warn you that this is going to be a rather convoluted discussion. In fact, it'll probably be even more convoluted than the discussion we had about absolute nothingness. It may even put you off Messiahism.



I'm sure it won't. I'm having a lot of fun here.



No problem. *Semper fi*, do or die.



Are you sure?



Bring it on.



I'm ready.



But is Milton *really* ready? That's what I'm wondering.



*Jesus H. Christ!* I'm beginning to think you might be a faggot.



A faggot? I fail to see how you could suspect me of being a pork meatball made from pigs offal.



LOL.



Don't bullshit me with that Lure of the Pedant crap. You know what I mean. I'm taking about being a closet gay.



I see. And what makes you think I'm a closet gay?



Because you seem to like teasing me. It's like we're standing in the restroom and you're about to whip out your cork. And you whisper to me, 'Are you ready for this, Milton?'

Are you sure? Because I got a really big one here!'



Do I look like George Michael? The point I want to make is that the universe exists only as long as I exist.



Hear that? Mister Smarty Pants Peckerhead has become Ming the Merciless.



Who?



Ever see that film, *Flash Gordon*? Ming the Merciless was some corksucker who wanted to rule the universe. You sound just like him.



I can sense some resistance to this. What I'm trying to get across is that once I've gone it won't matter if anyone or anything else exists. From my perspective the universe will have ended. That's because we experience it through our sensory organs and no one else's. The results of the Big Bang are not cosmological. They're personal. I've decided to go for broke. I've decided that Messiahism will teach us that the entire universe and everything in it exists in our minds. And nowhere else.



That reminds me of this boyfriend I had. He used to say I was always in his mind.



Not according to Mister Peckerhead he wasn't. You were both in *his* mind.



And so are you.



*Jesus H Christ!* He is a faggot!



Keep your voice down.



I live with two guys just like you.



Oh, yeah? And what does *that* say?



I was in an iron lung. My ass was protected.



Guy said he tried to get in one night while you were asleep. With a tin opener. LOL.



If you just wait I might be able to explain it to you. The problem with so-called outside influences is that that's all they are. *So*-called. That's because we experience them *inside* our minds. In order to experience a genuine outside influence we'd have to experience it from *outside* the mind. And that's not possible. We call them outside influences but, technically speaking, they're not. To labour a point, everything we experience we experience *inside* our minds.



*Jesus H. Christ!* What Mister Peckerhead is saying is starting to make some sense. And that scares the sheet out of me. Run it past me again.



Everything you do or tell me I experienced inside my mind.



Is this guy a faggot or not? I bet he wants to suck my cork. Like that Chaplain Charlie.



LOL.





Have you two finished? Okay, let me give you an example: when a scientist uses an instrument that measures something large like a planet or small like a quantum particle, he tells himself that those measurements are from outside his mind. Yet, when you press him about it, he'd have to admit that he's experiencing them *inside* his mind. He can't prove they're outside because any proof he comes up with will likewise be experienced inside his mind. For example, if he asks another scientist to confirm the measurement that scientist – and the confirmation – occurs inside his mind. Technically speaking, he's communicating with himself and not with anyone on the outside. He can only assume they're out there. He can never be absolutely sure.



Okay, so lemme just get this straight. According to you when I'm watching some gorgeous pole dancers obscenely gyrate around that metal bar they're doing it inside my mind. Those chicks are inside the head of Milton P. Smith.



Yes. Those girls may feel uncomfortable with it, but yes. They're inside your dirty mind.



*Holy Dogsheet!* If we promote the pole dancer angle this is going to be an easy religion to sell.



What are you suggesting? We give a raunchy porn movie to anyone who wants to convert to Messiahism?



We may have to if it doesn't sell.



Do you see any problem with the fact that everything is experienced inside your mind?



Nope. It's never bothered me before.



It bothers me. We're talking about solipsism.



I know what that is. That's when you believe only your own mind is real?



That's right.



I knew you had a hardon for weirdness. But just tell me you're not thinking of preaching that in Messiahism.



Why not? It'll make us completely different from those other religions.



Why not? *Holy Dogsheet!* Think about it, Mister Peckerhead. If you're the only person in the universe just who the fork are you going to convert to Messiahism? And who the fork would want to join a religion that says they only exist in your mind?



I admit there are certain metaphysical problems that need ironing out. In fact, it was one of those articles that suggested solipsism to me.



You really need to change your reading habits.



We'll discuss is later.



Okay, I we will while you're getting the drinks in.



I think it's your turn.



Negative. If everything exists in your mind who the fork else is gonna pay for them?



LOL

*Solipsism continues to intrigue me. I'm pretty sure that lots of things are happening outside my mind. But once I'm aware of them they're no longer outside. Outside is therefore a theoretical state. On the other hand, my fascination with solipsism has nothing to do with egotism. The thought that only my mind exists is too frightening to contemplate. Because, to be honest, my mind is far from perfect. As you will have probably guessed.*

*Yet I intended to adopt solipsism and use it in Messiahism. I could either go for total weirdness and pretend that only the Messiah existed or I could redefine it. The former was the most appealing because it would make Messiahism even more unique. And create a number of amusing paradoxes. Or I could introduce both options. I decided to think it over. I also came up with an even more outrageous religion based on a form of fundamental nihilism. The book's pages would be entirely blank, indicating that nothing exists. Not even this religion. Too far out? Perhaps. But it would be a damn sight better than this version. And the more I thought about it, the more appealing it became.*

## LIVING IN A BUBBLE GUM UNIVERSE!

*At this meeting we discussed weighty scientific subjects such as was our universe constructed by the Wrigley's Chewing Gum Company? And Milton confesses that one universe has always worked for him.*



We haven't got a lot of time today so I just want to mention an article I read about parallel universes. Apparently these are the latest fashion accessory in physics. So we need to include them into Messiahism. What d'you think?



You wanna know what I think?



Yes. I'm sure you're going to enthrall us with your views on cosmology.



I think bullshit. You're telling me those Eggheads are not satisfied with one forking universe? So they gotta have more? One universe works for me. Personally it sounds like the sort of sheet science fiction writers come up with. Are you sure we're not turning Messiahism into another version of *Scientology*?



Oh, dear. I do hope that wasn't meant to be a disparaging remark on a remarkable cult religion. Litigation, remember. Those people have very thin skins. Probably a genetic feature from those aliens they were derived from. Apparently parallel universes are seen by some as an inevitable consequence of their theory about the universe. One

explanation is that there are other parts of the universe so far away the light hasn't reached us yet. And each of those parts can be thought of as a bubble. And, although each bubble contains the same sort of stuff our bubble contains, there will be slight differences.



Goddamn it! We need more than that, don't we, Liz? Because it makes no forking sense to me. Light I can understand, but where do the bubbles come into it?



I'm just telling you what the article said. It was the only part I could comprehend. You'll have to ask a scientist to explain it in more detail



That was all you could comprehend? What happened to Mister Smarty Pants? So are we talking about bubble gum?



Wow! That would be great. But I think that's a bit too farfetched even for Messiahism. And here's something else. Because the universe is infinite there are only a finite number of possible variations. That means some bubbles will be the same as ours. There'll be parallel earths with parallel people on them. Clones of every one of us. On some parallel earths you'll be the Messiah! In others you'll be doing something completely different. Indeed, every possible variation of your life is probably being played out somewhere deep in the cosmos! So, if you're dreaming of having sex with a famous movie star, one of you could be doing just that.



Marilyn Monroe.



She's dead.



Maybe not on a parallel earth.



Justin Beiber.



Actually, when you stop to think about it, it's a pretty depressing thought. Picture it. On one parallel earth we're having it off with our favourite celebrity. Whilst here we're merely fantasising about it.



Some people might be. LOL.



Yeah, I keep dreaming about Nicole Kidman . We were in bed together.



What happened? I want all the details? LOL.



Her husband kept getting in the way.



And so *he* ended up getting shafted.



Lucky man.



I don't think *he'd* agree.



Affirmative. It went through him and into her.



I don't even want to imagine something like that! Okay, I think that just about wraps it up. Next time we'll take a look at another article I've read.



You're here for two weeks, right? Are you staying at the same place?





Yes, the White House.



Give Obama my regards.

*The White House was the name of a caravan park. Otherwise I would have held these meetings in the Oval Room which would have been great publicity. In bed that night, I had a lot of fun thinking about bubble universes. My wife may have been a bit disappointed. Like Milton said, the sea air can make them frisky. But when you're creating a religion you have no time for earthly pleasures. As Jesus and those other prophets will tell you. And I ended up dreaming about God's gigantic mouth blowing bubble universes. Then blowing so hard they popped. Then the dream shifted to a courtroom. I was the judge and God was in the dock accused of genocide. The police had all the evidence they needed. They told the jury the gum was plastered all over His face. What would Freud have made of it? The guy was obsessed with sex, so he'd have interpreted the dream representing a divine blowjob. The eventual destruction being my guilty conscience. After all, persuading the Almighty to perform fellatio would be considered blasphemy in anyone's book. Talking about books. As it turned out I came across a book in a charity shop that almost blew my mind. Whilst the message it gave wasn't as weird as the dream, it was pretty close.*

## ARE WE IN PRATCHETT'S DISCWORLD?

*I suppose if this hadn't been intended as a religion for atheists things might have been a lot easier. I'd have merely told people that God had chosen me to pass on the message that He was a computer. And that we were living in a virtual reality that He'd created for us. The reason being that infinity lasts for a long time and He needed something to keep Him amused. Actually, that was one of the options I considered when I came up with the idea of Messiahism. That it would be Christianity brought up to date. But I wanted to carve out a niche in the theological market and atheism was a prime target. As far as I knew no one had thought of giving atheists their own religion. So here was a market ripe for exploitation. This, of course, meant I couldn't rely on God to help me. As a result I was hoping that science might throw up a few theories to support my message. And I wasn't disappointed. The meeting below revolved around one of the theories I'd come across involving holograms.*



So what sort of books do you two like reading?



I don't get too much time for books. I'm either chatting on *Facebook*, watching telly or designing hats. But the books I do read are all about fashion.



Me, I like books that appeal to my feminine side. In fact, I've just read Alcott's *Little Women*. But I made sure there was a box of tissues handy.



You're joking.



What do you think?



I'm reading a book called, *The Black Hole War*. It's about a fight between two physicists. Leonard Susskind and Stephen Hawking.



That's terrible! I didn't know scientists fight each other.



He's not talking about a real fight. And if it was, Hawking's gonna be at a disadvantage. Yeah, I can just picture him in a caged bare knuckle fight. On the other hand he could fit some nitrous rockets to that chair and ram his opponent. So now you know the way my mind works. Okay, who won?



Susskind claims he did. He and another physicist called 't Hooft proved that the entire universe and everything in it is a holographic projection from the deepest part of the universe.



*Jesus H. Christ!* That is red pill weird.



Projected like a film, you mean?



You could put it like that.



Goddamn it! Now those Bible Nuts will tell us we're in a movie theatre and God is in the projection room. So what's this proof these two corksuckers say they have?



Don't ask me. It's all arcane mathematical stuff. But Susskind says the hologram theory has been accepted by his colleagues. And I'm assuming these two have done their sums right. Because 't Hooft is a Nobel winner and Susskind is professor of theoretical physics at Stamford University. So I reckon they must know what they're talking about. I love the hologram theory and I'm making these two guys honorary Messiahnists.



What exactly are holograms?



Apparently holograms consist of an array of 2D pixels that contain all the details of a 3D image. They have them on credit cards.



They also had them on Star Trek.



What? To boldly shop where no man has shopped before. Captain, we need some lithium crystals. No problem, Scotty. Just put them on my Federation Express.



LOL.



Liz was talking about holodecks. These were supposed to be highly sophisticated 3D role playing games used by the crew for R&R. I'm talking about Captain Picard's ship. Poor old Captain Kirk's Enterprise didn't have them because the special effects department were working on a tight budget. To put it simply, Susskind is telling us that our 3D universe is nothing but a holographic image that's been coded on a 2D surface located at the cosmic horizon. And that's not all. We know that the universe is expanding, right?



That's what the Eggheads tell us.



Well, according to Susskind this expansion is permanent. The universe will never stop expanding.



You mean it's gonna become clinically obese?



LOL. I heard a joke about that. She was so fat the sun went round *her*.



LOL. Now what they call the 'cosmic horizon' refers to the furthest we can see. Beyond the cosmic horizon the expansion is faster than the speed of light. Apparently Einstein's equation doesn't apply to a body the size of the universe. So we can never gather any data from there. In other words, the physicists can only guess what happens beyond that point because that's where the laws of physics end. And when a theory can't be proved it becomes metaphysical. Susskind did us another great favour. He said it was possible that these 2D pixels that project our 3D universe could be coming from a cosmic computer.



Another corksucker trying to sell his puppet-on-a-string theory.



Yes, and we need to remember as well that we're not here to plug Terry Pratchett's Discworld. Unless he's willing to plug Messiahism. Maybe I should find out who his publisher is. Anyway, I think that should be enough for today.



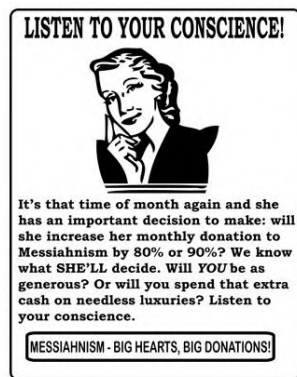
Hey, I just had a thought. If that projection is coming from the cosmic horizon we'd

better set out early if we're going home. We've got a helluva long way to go.

*Lately I'd been feeling a bit depressed. For a start I'd known that I'd be out of my depth when it came to the scientific side of things. So I purposely kept things simple and concentrated on the bottom line. It was a risky strategy because simplicity is not something you associate with religion or science. Both cover complex issues. Yet I felt that this simplicity would make Messiahism stand out from the rest. But I'd forgotten my fascination with the Lure of the Pedant. Instead of sticking to a few fundamental principles, I began to add more and more to it. There were also times when it seemed Liz and Milton weren't pulling their weight. Times when it seemed that they weren't taking Messiahism seriously. Of course I wanted humour. But not downright ridicule.*

*Then, out of the blue, along came the hologram theory. I knew immediately that it would fit in nicely with my computer analogy. Not only had Susskind persuaded Hawking that he was right, he'd also given new hope to the Messiah. Although I fancy that wasn't his main intention.*

*On the other hand, there was still some way to go. But two eminent physicists had made the journey to enlightenment a lot easier. So it was with a happy heart that I took part in our traditional evening 'find the golf ball' game. It was a game of Messiahistic simplicity. Before supper the Messiah and his brood would walk along the beach to the Rhyl Golf Club. And there we'd see who could find the most golf balls in the surrounding undergrowth. And that evening I was the winner. I took it as a good omen...*



## IN OR OUT?

*I was still intrigued by the philosophical concept of solipsism, so I decided to pursue it at our next meeting.*



Look at his face! He's going to pontificate. LOL.



Better tell the barmaid to get a mop and bucket ready.



LOL. You'd better stop it before I wet myself!



I used to have a girl friend that did that everytime she laughed.



So she would have been safe with you.



LOL. *Stop it!*





History reveals that all religions create divisions within themselves. Take the Christian religion. Over time it split in several factions: Catholics, Methodists, Christian Scientists, Jehovah's Witnesses, etc. And Messiahism will suffer the same fate.



Hold it, Mister Peckerhead. Isn't it a bit soon to worry about a split in Messiahism? We haven't even constructed the goddamn religion. We're still putting it together.



We've already sown the seeds for a split. At least I have.



You have?



When we discussed solipsism.



*Jesus H. Christ!* Not that again!



Yes, and I know you don't agree with me on this one. But even you can't deny that

everything we see, feel, or hear takes place *inside* our minds. And you can't deny that because we can never experience anything *outside* our minds, we can only assume there *is* an outside. The assumption may be true but that doesn't matter. As I've pointed out before, unless we can step outside our own minds to directly experience something, it'll always be an assumption. We each live in our own individual world and there's no getting around that.



He means we all live in *his* world, not ours. Because we're all in his mind. And it's a pretty dark place. LOL.



Okay, Mister Peckerhead. If you want me to sell this crock of sheet then you'd better come up a good reason why I should.



Because the concept of solipsism is going to form a central part of Messiahism. That's why. There are still some problems that need to be sorted out. For example, just what precise form this solipsism will take. However, today I want to concentrate on the broader issues. So Messiahism may end up with two schools of thought. Those who think they only exist in my mind and those who don't.



I get it. In one we're all figments of *your* imagination. And in the other you're just the figment of *our* imagination. That's the one I'm going for.



I believe *I'm* the only person in the universe, not the Messiah. I only let him think he is because I work in mysterious ways my wonders to perform.



The gods are arguing. And I think we'll end on that bombshell. Tonight is curry night. And you get a free drink with your meal. That's pretty good.



Forget the curry! You're just gonna let Liz get away with it? *Jesus H. Christ!* She just climbed Mount Olympus and challenged you.



He's going red in the face. LOL



Maybe we pushed him too far, Liz. He looks like he's gonna have a panic attack and end up bathed in sweat! And that's *before* he's had his forking curry!



You're very quiet, Messiah. Is anything wrong?



These creative types are candyasses. They just can't hack it when the heat is on. There was one writer...a French guy. I can't remember his name. He used to roll around on the carpet throwing a temper tantrum if he couldn't find the right word. They said when he was writing a novel he would wear a hole right through it.



What? The word or the carpet?



Lure of the Pedant time! That was Hitler, wasn't it?



Hitler did the same. But he used to chew it as well. Those Krauts will eat anything.



I need time to think this one through. I'm determined to stick with solipsism and I'm sure I can come up with a way to explain how it works.

*As we tucked into our curries the Lure of the Pedant caused me to consider all the ramifications. And I was acutely aware not only of the philosophical problems raised by solipsism, but also the mental ones. Thinking you're the only living creature in the universe can go to your head. You can experience what solipsism feels like if you imagine it to be true. It's a scary feeling. And a lonesome one. The curry had a similar effect. It acted as a catalyst and forced my digestive system to produce an abundant quantity of methane gas. The aroma can only be described as unpleasant. It was a combination of boiled cabbage, bad eggs and rotting carcasses. As a result I spent most of the night outside the caravan. My eldest son, who considers himself a bit of a wit, suggested I keep some distance from the caravan in case I stripped the paint from it.*

## THE PRIME CANDIDATE?

*The last meeting had presented me with a philosophical conundrum. Although it seemed a major intellectual challenge – one I was ill-prepared to meet - I was determined to try and create a workable theory as to how Messiahism's version of solipsism works. In fact, I'd come up with a few rough ideas. They just needed ironing out and I decided I would save them for the final session. At this meeting I propose yet another possible candidate for the 'something' that's created the virtual reality we live in.*



Today I want to talk about algorithms.



No sheet? Hell, it's a long time since I did maths. Let's see, if I remember an algorithm is a formula that's been created by an Egghead to solve a particular problem. Or by a computer to conduct a particular function.



That's right. My Eureka moment came when I discovered that computer algorithms are already taking over from us humans in certain areas. For example, the code that runs the web is based on algorithms. Algorithms are used by film studios to predict hit movies and over 70% of trading on Wall Street is controlled by computers using them.



So it was Bill Gates who caused the credit crunch.



Everything controlled by computers uses algorithms. From running complex simulations like weather forecasting to creating realistic virtual realities in computer games. Finally, at least one physicist has suggested that the universe is based on mathematics. In other words, we didn't create maths. Maths created us. That makes algorithms as strong contender for the role of Messiahism's deity.



So now we could end up praying to a pocket calculator.



I think we can safely assume it's a little more sophisticated than that.



That was a joke.



I think we've got another catchy slogan. It has a Tin Pan Alley ring about it. In fact we could even use it to create our own hymn. The chorus goes: 'I've got algorithm, you've got algorithm, who could ask for anything more?'



That's terrible! To be really effective you need to do it in Ella Fitzgerald's voice.



She sung it, right?



Yes. And that voice of hers!



*Jesus H. Christ!* What is this? A goddamn Limey pub or the New York School of the Performing Arts?



Milton's got a point. We should leave the world of entertainment to Simon Cowell. Now what are you doing, Liz?

*At this point there was a rather surreal incident. I was about to continue with the discussion when Liz gave an impromptu rendition of 'I've Got Rhythm' And, as befitting the Queen of Karaoke, it was sung in Fitzgerald's distinctive voice. When she finished there was a round of applause from the other customers. We, however, could only sit and look at her in amazement. Rising up to acknowledge her appreciative audience, Liz bowed and sat down again as though nothing had happened.*

*I was about to continue when there was yet another interruption. And this time it was the Landlord. It turned there were a couple who were in the pub celebrating their golden wedding. And they wanted to know if Liz would sing a few songs for them. I could have told them that we were in the process of constructing a cult religion, but chose not to. I was, after all, a self-styled Messiah and religious leaders are supposed to be tolerant. So I just sat there and fumed. Milton, however, regarded it as a big joke.*

## THERE SEEMS TO BE NO END TO INFINITY!

*In this meeting I tried to describe the perplexing and paradoxical nature of infinity to a rather sceptical Milton. I suspected that my disciples weren't going to give me an easy ride. I imagine Jesus had a few disagreements with his. But, unlike me, he could raise the dead, turn water into wine and, when the occasion demanded, feed 5000 on a seemingly endless supply of fish and bread. So he had more clout which would have made his job easier. On the other hand, my experiences would harden me to the trials and tribulations of becoming a religious leader.*



Today, if you don't mind, I'd like to talk about infinity.



What's to talk about? If you remember we covered infinity a while back. Right, Liz.



Milton's right.



But it's your religion. You're the Messiah. So, if you wanna talk about infinity, go right ahead. We'll listen, won't we, Liz?



We'll be all ears.





Thank you. Okay, I'll start by asking if you've ever wondered what happens to the past?



Nope. What about you, Liz?



No.



Hear that, Mister Peckerhead? Like most individuals we're too busy thinking about the present and wondering about the future. As far as we're concerned, the past has gone. Right, Liz?



Dead and buried, Milton.



But not for the Messiah, right? He has to buck the trend.



I was expecting more resistance. Okay, I look at it this way: if nothingness can't exist then the past must still be out there somewhere. And, lo and behold, it is! The best

example of that is the light from the stars. The light we see is millions and in some cases billions of years old. Are you ready for another thought experiment?



*Jesus H. Christ!* You're getting a real hardon for those motherforkers. Make you feel like an Egghead, do they?



I want thought experiments to be part of what Messiahism is all about.



No problem. Unless those corksucking Eggheads own a patent on them.



I sometimes wonder if you're just taking the peace. Okay, here's the thought experiment: imagine you were on a planet millions of light years away. Your name was Ogg and you're a brilliant scientist.



Ogg? That's no good. Can't you come up with a better name for an alien? It sounds more like a caveman.



That's just what I was thinking.



What does it matter what his name is? The thought experiment isn't about what sort of name an alien should have. His name is irrelevant.



Not to Ogg it isn't. LOL.



Your name is Ogg and you've invented a telescope powerful enough to see the surface of our planet. Now, the light from earth has taken so long to reach you, you can see dinosaurs roaming the surface.



Hold it right there, Mister Peckerhead! I'm gonna invoke the Lure of the Pedant.



Do we really have to do this?



If pedantry is gonna be practiced in Messiahism then it's our duty. This Peeping Tom ET could be looking through someone's window and *Jurassic Park* was showing on TV.



In that case two can play the pedant game. In that case the light hasn't taken long to reach Ogg. He'd be much closer. Like the moon or Mars. Right?



Right. You were lucky that time.



Maybe Ogg's device is a radio telescope. Radio and TV signals from earth are travelling through space. So, in a few million years time Ogg will be able to enjoy the delights of *Love Lucy* and *Sergeant Bilko*.



Let's hope not. Those corksuckers may see it as an excuse to obliterate our planet if that appeared on their monitors.



Wouldn't it be great if we got alien soap operas? On the other hand those scientists would probably be so busy watching them they wouldn't get any work done.



I can't see the Jodrell Bank telescope becoming the world's most expensive satellite dish. But I like the way Liz thinks. And I can just imagine some of the programs. Constellation Street. Or old TV movies like *Saturn Night Fever*.



What about alien TV porn channels? Up Uranus.



LOL. That's where you get sex in a black hole. The point I'm trying to make is that everything we've done in the past is still out there. All we need is a time machine.



I took a sheet yesterday. Are you saying that event will circulate through the cosmos?



Yes, and I'm betting it'll be an improvement on *I Love Lucy* and *Sergeant Bilko*.



There's only one way to find out. LOL.



What? Come on, Liz! You really want the Gunny to squeeze a curly one out here in the pub? People are eating.



No, he can come round to my place. I have a nice toilet.



Sounds good to me.



Next you'll be asking him if she can watch.



If that turns her on.



You never know. LOL.



This is just a joke and you're trying to wind me up.



Yeah, it was just a joke. Right, Liz? A sheety joke.



That's right. What sort of girl do you take me for? LOL.



Sorry, Liz. Anyway, it goes far deeper than the movement of Milton's bowels. Messiahism will suggest, along with some scientists, that in a state of absolute infinity there's no past, present or future. In other words, everything that has happened, is happening, and can ever happen, has already happened. Past, present and future, are

frozen in time. Our lives from birth to death are recorded. Indeed, every possible variation of our lives is deep frozen there. Absolute infinity is a universal database containing a record of everything.



Is that so? I'm figuring the FBI could use something like that.



How would it work? If you could see a future crime you'd prevent it. But, having prevented it, how would you see it in the first place?



I guess the Lure of the Pedant has just put the FBI's latest crime fighting device out of business. I think we should wind up for the day. That was a big meal and I need to take a dump.



Can you last out to my place?

*They giggled as they got up to leave and I was left with the distinct impression that this was no wind up. Liz really was going to watch Milton defecate. Was this some ancient Celtic fertility ceremony? On the other hand, they were both consenting adults. So good luck to them. Although I was hard pressed trying to work out how the sight of Milton taking a dump could, in any shape or form, be considered erotic. On the other hand I recalled the time I'd applied for a job on the Internet that involved writing reviews of the porn sites. I was going to use the experience to write a gonzo style article for one of those adult magazines. Thus getting paid twice for the same job. And some of the practices I came across were far worse than what those two were contemplating. I'm not squeamish, but the sight of an naked overweight woman contorting herself so a stream of diarrhoea could land in her mouth was a bit near the knuckle. Or the nose, depending on how you look at it.*

## PERCHANCE TO DREAM!

*In this meeting we jokingly explore the possibility of dreams helping the homeless. We also briefly dwell on Milton's extremely pornographic dream. And, in a more serious vein, we establish that dreams are physical in nature. Thus adding an extra element of spice into that dream of Milton's.*



I remember asking my mother where our dreams come from and she said they came from our imagination. Then I asked her if the images were real. I had this fear that whenever I dreamed about something big – like a house – it would appear in my bedroom. Given that my bedroom was small, I was naturally concerned that this would result in some structural damage and injury to me. The fact that this never happened amazed me. Until my mother assured me that the images that appeared in my dreams were not real.



I'd have left you guessing. Hear that, Liz? Mister Smarty-Pants-Peckerhead spent his childhood lying in bed sheeting himself in case something big fell on him.



Sounds like something an abused child would say.



That's not very funny.





Okay, let's get this straight. When your Mom said your dreams existed in your imagination she probably meant they were non-physical. Right?



Right.



So we can assume that she was not an Egghead. She certainly didn't give birth to one. So that's another big clue. How could you see the motherforkers if they were non-physical? At the marine combat engineering course at Fort Pendleton we were taught that all physical bodies had size, shape, weight, mass, colour or temperature. That includes stuff we can't see. The gas that comes out of your ass is invisible. But when it forms into a cloud it has shape. And when you measure it, it also has that other stuff. So it's still a physical substance. But take size, shape and the rest of it away and you got something that's more than just forking invisible!



That was the question I asked myself. And, because I can see them, there must be something physical there *to* see. And then I realised that if dream images *were* real, this could solve the problem of homelessness. All we had to do was extract those images from our dreams. But where were they? Some people said they were inside our brain. But how could they be? The houses I dream about look to be the same size as real ones. And if they *are* physical objects they'd need to be pretty small to fit inside the brain. Because with all that tightly packed grey matter and all those nerves and all those veins, there's not much room for a detached house, let alone a string of terraced ones. There's another other problem: if they're in your brain you'd need to be able to look inside your head. Does that mean when you dream your eyes swivel round? What a great idea for a horror movie. The Man Who Looked Inside His Head! See his eyes spin round.



*Ugh!*



So the most logical place for them to be is outside your head. But where outside? Because the thing is only *you* can see them. Maybe they're in another dimension. So you'd need a special device that can travel to other dimensions to get to get them out of there.



So it looks like the homeless are out of luck.



Poor things. If you were a real Messiah you'd find a way of getting those houses out of there. The Messiah Transport Company. We can make your dreams come true. LOL.



But he can't. Which is great because I get a real buzz kicking those homeless motherforkers aside when I walk down the street.



Your compassion never ceases to amaze me. And what about hallucinations and optical illusions? We know that hallucinations can be produced by mental illness, such as schizophrenia. They can also be caused by alcoholism and certain mind bending substances. But we're not only talking of images. Hallucinations can also be tactile,

olfactory, and aural. In other words, you can feel, hear, and smell them. This could make life very difficult for you.



Not if you're a drug crazed hippy. One way to tell if they're real is to get a second opinion. So you can ask someone if they also saw that pink elephant with a naked Nicole Kidman on its back. That way they'd know they were a loony tune and get some treatment. But that's not always foolproof. For example, the individual you ask could *pretend* they see them. That's what I would do.



That's pretty sick. Funny, but sick. But then you seem to be the sort of guy who'd get a laugh playing tricks on some poor alcoholic.



What do you think?



And when you were a child I bet you pulled the wings off flies.



If I had to walk so did they.



You haven't mellowed, have you?



Don't let that big marine fool you. I've discovered he has a gentle side.



Hello? What have we here? You let a man have a Number Two at your house and suddenly the wedding bells are ringing. No, please don't say anything. I don't want to know what went on. It's pretty clear that dreams indicate the existence of two separate realities. An inner reality and an outer reality. And this makes us think of parallel universes and other dimensions.



So we get rid of that imaginary sheet and teach those maggots dreams have a physical reality?



Yes. We tell them that dream images, hallucinatory images, and optical illusions are physical. Dreams are physical in the same way that the images on your TV or computer monitor are physical. They probably also consist of electromagnetic waves. But these are not just simple TV images. You can actually go inside some of the houses you dream about. In fact, dreams can be 3D virtual realities. Some can be so good you think they're real. The only difference between the virtual realities created by computers and dreams is that we can actually hear, smell, and feel our dreams. And, once we invent a computer that can control our senses, computer games will be just as sophisticated as dreams.



I knew it wouldn't be long before you brought computers into it.



Considering it's a religion for the computer generation I can hardly leave them out. Messiahism will teach that something is trying to tell us there's a connection between this reality and computers. Maybe not a direct connection, but a connection nevertheless. There are just too many hints.



Dreams, huh? It's lucky they're just for personal use. For example, that Bacchanalian orgy I dreamed about last night featuring musical instruments, midgets, dwarves, lap dancers, 500 gallons of axle grease and various livestock is not one I would like to share. To think those images were physical! *Jesus H. Christ!* When I thought it couldn't get any better that has just added an extra dimension to it.



What a shame. I would have loved to have seen that one.



Tough titty. You are not ready for that kind of thing. What happened in my dream would severely test your faith in human nature. Okay, is that it?



Yes, I think we can end on the rather lewd imagery that conjures up. I just hope it hasn't embarrassed poor Liz.



Not at all. In fact it's given me some interesting ideas.

*Romance was in the air and I told my wife to call me Messiah the Matchmaker. She reminded me of the time I did some decorating and made a mess of it. 'If you can't even match two simple sheets of wallaper,' she said, 'I can't see you matching anything else.' With that stinging remark ringing in my ears I retired prepare for our next meeting. It was now time to try and tie down some lose ends. The first one involved our version of genesis which was proving to be a bit of a nightmare.*



## MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING!

*At this meeting I'd decided to try and pin down that elusive 'something' that exists instead of nothingness. We also briefly discussed the question of awareness. It was yet another of those short meetings as Milton had some work to do. As I've mentioned, the Gunny was a employed by Gordon as a bailiff and had been asked to remove some squatters who'd occupied some property owned by one of Gordon's clients. Although they were probably drug addicts I felt sorry for them. They would certainly need a fix after the Gunny had finished with them!*



I've already mentioned that in Messiahism, genesis is based on the principle that nothing can't exist. This inevitably means that something must exist. And Messiahism suggests that this 'something' is constructed of many parts. In fact this 'something' consists of everything that *can* exist. Okay?



I got no problem with that.



Good. No half measures in Messiahism. It's all or nothing. By everything that must include a state of awareness. I prefer that term rather than consciousness. Talking about awareness, you two seem to be getting along quite well.



Mister Peckerhead is trying to find out if we sleep together.



Would that make a difference?



No, of course not. What you do in the privacy of your own bathroom is your own business. That and your plumber's.



I get it! Mister Peckerhead is worried it might affect our work. Well you can relax, goddamnit! She watched me take a sheet and got the hots for me. It happens. We're adults. We're not a couple of moonstruck teenagers. I gotta take a leak.



Would you like to go with him, Liz?

*For a moment I thought I might have insulted her. But Liz just laughed and explained that she hadn't really watched him defecate. Adding that although she was pretty broad minded, the thought of doing something like that turned her stomach. I mentioned the image I'd seen on one of the porn sites and she looked shocked. At this point Milton returned and she told him what we'd been talking about. Milton laughed and said he's seen that image as well. In fact he'd downloaded and printed it out. It was now inside his wardrobe as a pin up – along with photos of military weapons. As I left the pub I toyed with the idea of getting another disciple instructor. Perhaps a former senior NCO in the British Army. My wife said it was pity we weren't back in the '50's otherwise I could have got Albert Pierrepont, the public hangman. I joked that I would have had to dangle something in front of him to get him interested.*



## SHED A TEAR FOR DAWKINS!

*In the next meeting I discussed my recent dream about Bertram Russell and the effect it would have on Richard Dawkins. I recall it was a pretty vivid dream. What surprised me was it involved a philosopher. The people in my dreams are usually pretty ordinary and, up until then, none had been famous. Maybe it was the sea air. Or the blue cheese I'm partial to.*



I'd like to tell you about this dream I had last night.



Okay. Was it a wet one?



I bet it was! He told us he went trawling through the porn sites. LOL.



That was work. No, it wasn't a wet dream.



*Bullsheet!* I bet you had some wet ones, right? And when you woke up you had to hit those sheets with a hammer. And I bet they broke like a piece of candy. I just hope your Messiahism doesn't preach any of that crap about celibacy. I believe celibacy is against the law of nature. Because if nature didn't want us to copulate it would not have given us sexual organs and encourage us to use them. If nature had wanted those Catholic

priests to be celibate she would have made those motherforkers impotent. But I'm hoping we Messiahnists believe in copulation. That we know what those other creatures in the animal kingdom know. We know that we must copulate to propagate.



Copulate to propagate – that has a certain ring to it.



Yes, a cork ring. LOL.



Gordon told me they use it in the gay marriage ceremony. With this cork ring I thee fornicate.



It wasn't a wet dream, it was a weird one. Last night I dreamed I was in the reading room of the British Library when I saw Bertrand Russell sitting at one of the tables.



Who the fork is he?



He was a famous philosopher. One of the Eggheads we Messiahnists love.



Okay. so you dreamed about this guy. Are you sure this isn't a wet dream?



I'm positive. Anyway, I asked Russell if he was working on yet another monumental example of analytic philosophy. Russell took his pipe out of his mouth and shook his head. And when I expressed surprise he went on to explain that after writing *Principia Mathematica* he'd lost his appetite for complexity. As a result his latest theory would be based on the principle of absolute simplicity. So I said to him, 'What an amazing coincidence. So am I!' Russell nodded and told me that his Ratio Simplex, as he put it, was based on what he regarded as the Fundamental Law of the Universe. According to Russell this states that, whatever can exist in thought alone or in thought and reality, will at some time exist. Now Russell was worried that the term Ratio Simplex might put ordinary people off. This is because he wanted this particular work to be available to ordinary people. So I redefined the Fundamental Law of Everything. And that it stated: 'If it can be, it will be.' This made Russell a very happy man. But it was going to make us atheists very unhappy.



*Holy Dogsheet!* You're not going to tell me Russell proved God exists?



I'm afraid so. And he did it very convincingly. As a result, Messiahism will teach us that whether we liked it or not this deity exists. It matters not if he's merely an imaginary god or – as the Religious Nuts claim - he has some form of reality. That's irrelevant. Russell told me we can't make God go away. To do that would mean removing the very concept of a supreme being from every language on earth and expunging it from our memory. That would take some very powerful magic.



Goddamn it! Where the fork is Harry Potter when you need him?



Yes, I imagine Dawkins would love Potter to do just that. Now, everyone knows that Dawkins is a famous Egghead. But I believe that such a goal would be beyond even *his* grasp. And, if Dawkins *could* do it, then people would say he had the powers of a god. And I'm not sure if Dawkins' psychological make-up is strong enough to sustain a shock like that. Bearing that in mind, I feel that his book, *The God Delusion*, was a compromise. It was an attempt by Dawkins to persuade as many people as he could that God was a delusion. But he came up against the Fundamental Law of Everything. What can be, will be.



What can be, will be. I like it.



There was a song like that. Doris Day sang it. It was called, '*Whatever Will Be Will Be.*'



Maybe she dreamed of this Russell guy as well.



Can we concentrate on *my* dream. Thank you. And I realised that if there can be such a thing as a Religious Nuts, these people will exist. And they do exist.



Affirmative. In fact, there's far too many of the motherforkers. *Jesus H. Christ!* You'd think that this Fundamental Law of Everything had a hardon for Religious Nuts. Why else does it give us so many? These corksuckers really do believe in propagation through copulation. They breed like rabbits. And what do you do with rabbits? You shoot them.



You might. But not everyone shares your penchant for firearms. It's a brick wall even an Egghead like Dawkins can't demolish! So when Dawkins tried to take on God he met his match. If his book creates more disbelievers than believers, then our friend Dawkins can celebrate. But he has a long way to go. And chances are he may never get there. But he's made some money out of it, so it won't be a total disaster. However, this illustrates just how powerful this God is.



Be careful. I seen how easy it is for some guys to get sucked in to religion. Next thing we know you're going to bible reading classes.



I'll tell my parents. They run one. LOL.



Russell's Fundamental Law of Everything is just what a deity needs. This is the law that says if it's possible for people to believe in a god then those people will exist. And the deities – be it God or Zeus or Thor – don't need to go recruiting themselves. There are plenty of humans only too willing to do the missionary work for them. Neither do they need to perform any miracles. The law of chance means that every now and then something unusual will happen that no one can explain. This enables the Religious Nuts

to claim that their deity must have done it. In fact, these gods don't even need to be real. They just need to exist in the imagination of the gullible and superstitious. So we can say that gods are the ultimate couch potatoes.



I figure hard work would probably kill them.



Wrong! If you were all powerful you wouldn't need to do any hard work. Everything would be easy for you.



Lure of the Pedant, right? I should have seen that coming.



And there's another important factor to consider. Would everyone want to get rid of God? If the concept were to totally vanish, it wouldn't harm just the Religious Nuts. No. We agnostics and atheists would also miss him. We'd have nothing to argue about. Our lives would be empty. We'd just have to invent another one.



How about you? The Simple God for Simple People.



Great idea! Intellectuals will be quick to criticise Messiahnism for its simplistic theories. For our devotion to the Bottom Line. But who else is worshipping the Bottom Line?

We've identified a niche in the theological market and we're filling it. It's as simple as that. Critics will argue that Messiahism is not meant to be a thinking person's religion. It's for the lazy and the educationally challenged. I disagree. It caters for both groups. If the intellectually challenged find Messiahism is just up their street, then good luck to them. We're giving them a religion that requires the minimal intellectual effort.



A religion for all mental ages. That could be a great selling point. Ask yourself this: has anyone with a single figure IQ ever read the Bible? While those other Religious Nuts are sitting around quoting passages from the Good Book, those poor peckerheads are left out in the cold. And even if someone read it to them, they probably wouldn't understand it.



You're right.



But with Messiahism they don't need to read any books. No, sir! They just need to know that they exist because they have to.

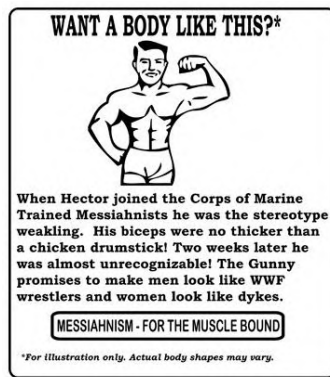


Okay, I think we'll finish there.

*A religion for all intelligences! Even a politically correct fundamentalist couldn't argue against a religion that was simple for all to understand. And the message from Messiahism that both atheists and theists need God, but for different reasons, might bring the two groups closer together. After all, we both have a mutual interest in this fictitious deity. There was one thing I didn't mention. Whenever I was flicking through the TV remote I always stopped on the God Channel! I had a morbid fascination with it. The same morbid fascination people have for looking at accidents. Of course, the Religious Nuts would argue that their God is making me do this. If so, He's not doing a*

*very good job because this channel makes me cringe. I can't watch them for longer than a couple of minutes. It's like watching the contestants on one of those awful Japanese shows humiliating themselves. You feel embarrassed for them. How could they do something like this? In this case the Bible Belt interpretation would be that it's the Devil who's making me cringe and giving me these negative thoughts. That this is a classic battle between God and Satan. And they're both fighting for my soul. Now that would boost anyone's ego. Then I realised that this could form a religious conspiracy theory. That God sees Messiahism as a threat to his existence. And it's Satan who has created Messiahism through me. In other words I'm like that kid Damien in The Omen.*

*Fortunately the Law of Opposites is stronger than God and Satan. In this universe at least, Religious Nuts are going to have to put up with atheists and atheists will have to put up with Religious Nuts. Come on! Face it. For better or worse we're stuck with each other.*





## A QUANTUM OF NO SOLACE!

*During this meeting I discussed quantum physics. Or at least I tried to discuss it. Because I'm not a scientist by any stretch of the imagination, the subject was thinly covered. Think of those apocryphal opaque slices of ham you get on a railway station cafe sandwich. That's how thin it was. Nevertheless, quantum physics is important because it adds scientific weight to our religion which teaches that what we call reality is merely an illusion.*



I mentioned at the beginning about the book that really inspired me. *Quantum Enigma: Physics meets Consciousness*. And I want to talk a bit about that.



In my case it was the *Marine Corps Manual 1100*. But then I never wanted people to think I was a Mister Smarty Pants.



I should have guessed. Let me guess what yours was, Liz. The *Kama Sutra*?



That's for beginners. I have the advanced edition.



Really? Can I borrow it?



Trust us, Mister Peckerhead. It's not for you. It would be like giving a blind man roller skates.



How mean can you get? Anyway, Quantum Enigma is our version Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code*. Full of fascinating clues. I just hope the authors appreciate our plug.



Because we love Eggheads. But we're not gonna be having sex with them At least I won't be.



Neither will I. What about you, Liz?



That depends on what they look like. But the ones I've seen don't give me much encouragement.



As the title indicates, the book is about quantum physics which is regarded as the strongest of all the sciences. It's certainly not a new branch of science. In fact, the first scientist to study quantum physics was Max Planck in 1900. And since then not one prediction made by quantum physics has ever been proved false.



*Jesus H. Christ!* Those Eggheads must be better than I thought.



And when scientists tell you that the strongest science for explaining nature has nothing at all to do with reality, that's a good reason for taking the red pill.



And once you swallow that red pill you can expect all kinds of weirdness. So what the fork is quantum physics all about?



I'm not a physicist. But from what I can gather it's the study of subatomic particles. Meaning they're smaller than an atom. They call them particles but no one knows what they look like. That's how small they are. Apparently the entire universe is made up of quantum particles. And that includes everything in it. You and I are made up of them. So, you can appreciate that what happens in the quantum world also happens in the entire universe. Only on a different scale. How important is quantum physics? Well, without it there'd be no electronics industry. No computers. Without quantum physics we'd be using Pascal's mechanical calculator. So I reckon we should at least mention it, don't you?



I use Milton's organic calculator.



What's that?



My fingers.



LOL. That's handy.



From what I gathered these particles are smaller than light itself. In fact, light is made of quanta or packets of particles. This means that any instrument we use, no matter how delicate, would be equivalent to using the proverbial sledgehammer to crack a nut. Let's consider what we do when we observe an object. We do two things: we measure its speed and determine its position in space. But with a particle you can only do one or the other. And that's the problem. When you measure its speed, its position in space changes. And when you measure its position, its speed changes. So it's never where you want it to be.



*Hey!* That's pretty funny. So when they know those Eggheads are looking for them, those little corksuckers play hide-and-seek. They got balls. I like them.



This means it's impossible to see them. In fact, physicists work on the principle that for

all practical purposes these particles don't exist until they're observed. The physicists can't even produce a theory that explains what these particles are doing before they're observed. Where they come from. Or how they're made. They just appear. Like magic out of thin air.



We're talking Hogwarts Academy stuff. But I guess it carries more weight coming from an Egghead than from J. K. Rowling.



And it gets even worse. They can exist as particles – where the energy is concentrated in a small area – or they can be waves where the energy is spread out. And, before we observe them, they're said to exist in both states at the same time. What the physicists call a 'superposition state.'



Well, blow me down. I didn't know that. Did you, Liz?



No, I didn't. For some reason they didn't teach quantum whatsit at school.



Particle and wave. Think of a billiard table that also looks like a billiard ball.



You want me to levitate while I'm doing it?



If you like.



How about a military band playing in the background? And fireworks?



I'll just wait until you've finished.



Okay, we're ready for some more red pill weird.



The billiard-table-billiard-ball analogy is not to be taken literally. It's an abstract theoretical state. It's imaginary. It doesn't exist in reality.



*Phew!* That'll be a relief to people who play billiards.



The physicists just imagine they exist in two states at the same time. And when it's observed it becomes either a particle or a wave. Only no one can be certain which form it'll take. That's down to probability. Observing it is said to collapse the wave function

and turn it into one or the other.



Mister Smarty Pants is really going to town on this one. If we can't even see these motherforkers how do we know they exist?



One method is to use a particle accelerator and shoot them through a tank of heavy water at a metal plate. They leave tracks all over it.



What else you got? I'm getting to like this weird stuff. What about you, Liz?



You know me. The weirder the better.



Okay, the quantum physicists will tell you that a particle can be everywhere in the universe at the same time. How's that?



Not bad. Any more?



This isn't Twilight Zone weird, but the discovery of so-called 'dark energy' in space raises the possibility that there could be other forms of energy that have yet to be discovered. So it's entirely possible that our 'something' is a form of energy. 'Consciousness' – that could be a form of energy.



Yeah, for all we know there could be all kinds of energy. Take my grandmother. They said she had psychic energy and she could heal people. If she'd been born earlier those Religious Nuts would have burned her as a witch.



I don't think we should go down that path.



What? Burning witches sounds like fun.



No, I meant we shouldn't suggest there's such a thing as psychic energy. This is Messiahism, not Ghostbusters. We're using the computer not the Ouija board as an analogy. Now let's consider the implications of Bell's Theorem.



What the fork is that?



The one that states two glasses will get you drunk.





He's talking about *Bell's* whisky. I think that was another of the Messiah's jokes.



Not one of my best. John Bell was a physicist.



He put bubbles into whisky. LOL.



How many rum and cokes has she had? Isn't there a code of conduct for stenographers?



Yeah, they're supposed to copy other people.



LOL. I take the words out of their mouths.



Quite simply, Bell's theorem states when two objects meet they become permanently entangled. As a result, the behaviour of one influences the other. And this is true throughout the universe. However, the larger the objects the more complex become the influences. In fact, at some point they become too complex to notice. But for small

objects like particles the effect is really dramatic. In fact, Einstein refused to believe it. You probably won't either.



Try me. I'm not as clever as Einstein.



Every particle has a polarity. It's either horizontal or vertical. But, until you observe the particle, you can't be certain which polarity it'll have. This is down to probability. The act of observation is said to collapse a particle's wave function and its polarity then becomes one or the other. Now, let's say you produce two individual particles. Because the polarity of each one is determined by probability, you'd expect that they'll sometimes have the same polarity and other times they won't.



This is not making any forking sense to me. How about you, Liz?



He lost me way back. LOL.



Okay, it's like tossing a coin. Sometimes it'll come up heads and other times it'll come up tails. Depending on probability.



That's better. You say Messiahism is based on simplicity, but you just can't help being a

Mister Smarty Pants. If I'm gonna be explaining this to my novices it needs to get a lot less complicated. Because I may be wrong about this, but I figure there won't be that many quantum physicists amongst them.



Okay, I'll see what I can do. Okay, here's a more dramatic way of illustrating it. You can use this one on your novices. Tell them to imagine two men. Tom and Dick.



What happened to Harry?



Yeah, there were always three of them. Tom, Dick and Harry.



You can tell our novices that he ran away with Tom's wife. They're living in Wigan. He works in a black pudding factory and she works as a hairdresser.



That's nice. LOL.



Tom and Dick have this obsessive behaviour. They'll only wear red or blue socks.



They're not marines. Marines only wear green socks.



No, I'm sorry to disappoint you, but they're not marines. And they both have this genetic condition that has left them blind in their early 30's.



That's terrible. Especially after what happened to Tom.



*Jesus H. Christ!* What else are you gonna do to these poor motherforkers?



Okay, you can tell your novices that the Messiah is like the angry God of the Old Testament. Tom and Dick have sinned. They were necrophiliacs. They liked having sexual intercourse with dead people.



Then they must have been morticians. That's why I'm going to bury my mother myself. I've heard stories about those corksuckers and I don't want some sick pervert screwing her in the Chapel of Rest.



Your devotion to your parents is to be admired.



Hell, they can have my father. The guy's always complaining he's getting it up the ass from the government, from his bosses, from my mother. So he can get it from the mortician as well.



*Ugh!* Sex with dead people. Who would do such a thing?



I know it's sick. But look at it this way: there'd be less hassle because there'll be no negative comments from your partner. Like, 'Was that it?' Or, 'I thought it was bigger than that.' Don't you agree?



*You* might get those comments, Mister Peckerhead. But I don't. But you got a point. And sex is about experimentation. About trying something new. You might be into necrophilia or you might be into bondage...stuff like that.



I'd have thought bondage on a corpse is pretty pointless. So is sadism. And if you did it with a bunch of dead prostitutes it'd be case of flogging dead whores.



LOL. You're sick, Funny, but sick.



You sometimes come across necrophilia in the military. In combat you got no women – just lots of dead bodies lying around. Doing nothing. And they're open to any anything. Especially when they've been hit by a grenade.



Are you serious?



I was just joking.



I hope so.



Those men who have problems dating girls could try it. All they need is a spade, a lantern, and a map to the nearest cemetery. Anyway, I think we're in danger of turning this into a sex guide for necrophiliacs. I don't want a splinter church. The Church of the Ravaged Dead. So let's get back to our original discussion. What were we were talking about?



Tom and Dick – the blind twins with a sock fetish.



Okay, they both have a drawer filled with red and blue socks. And – even though one lives in London and the other in Glasgow – they both pick the same colour socks every day. Year in, year out. Until they die at the ripe old age of 120.



Let's just hope no one takes your advice and digs them up. Yeah, I'd say that's red pill weird. Because there's no way they could keep choosing the same socks every time.



That's what happens to those two particles. They both emerge with the same polarity. No matter how far apart they are. That's because Bell's Theorem states that when two objects meet they become entangled or connected. With very small objects this entanglement can be seen. But with larger objects it's much more subtle and therefore undetected. But there's an even weirder message from quantum physics. The *really* weird message is the fact that quantum physics suggests that nothing is real until it's observed. But it's just too weird for the Eggheads. The science is suggesting something they don't even want to think about. It's just too crazy. So some choose to ignore it. Others have tried to come up with a counter explanation. But, so far, they haven't managed to disprove it. So it hangs over their heads like the sword of Damocles.



Some people might think those Eggheads have been reading too many Harry Potter books. I always wondered what was going through the mind of a drug crazed hippy. But instead of going to Woodstock maybe I should have gone to the Michigan Institute of

Technology.



Okay, let's try and move on. If you want to be a serious PC gamer then you need the latest kit. Top of the range processors are simply no good unless you can make them go a bit faster. This arcane geek ritual is known as overclocking. But this is no good unless you also have the latest graphics card, memory, hard drive and God knows what else. But there's a downside. This inevitably makes the computer hotter. So you need an efficient cooling system. One way is to fit more powerful fans, turning the machine into a miniature wind farm. Others use a liquid nitrogen or hydrogen. As a result some PC's are so cool they become cryogenic chambers in which you can keep a human body for a thousand years.



Your necrophiliac would need an ice pick to get at those motherforkers.



But Messiahism's cloud computer only plays one game. A game that contains this universe and everything in it. And, just for good measure, any other universes that may happen to be out there. We all know this game well for the simple reason we're all in it. But we'll discuss that next time.

*If I've struggled with the metaphysical aspects of quantum physics than just spare a thought for the experts. Even since Mother Nature decided to fork with our minds and revealed a portion of her underwear to Max Planck in 1900, physicists and philosophers have been trying to grapple with this enigma. It would be a different kettle of fish if this was an obscure branch of science. No, the problem is quantum physics is our strongest science. Without it you can kiss the electronics industry goodbye. I'd be writing this on a typewriter and Steve Jobs and Bill Gates would probably be working in the mechanical calculator industry. So it's only natural that physicists tried to find a rational explanation. For example, there's something called the Copenhagen Interpretation, which has nothing at all to do with translating Danish, the Extreme Copenhagen, (one detects a note of desperation here). And something called Decoherence and Consistent Histories. Then there's the Many Worlds Theory, (apparently a favourite explanation). Not to mention*



*the Heisenberg Uncertainty Principle and, just for good measure, Schrodinger's Cat in a Box. There could be more but there comes a point when we ordinary mortals have to say, enough is enough. If it works don't tinker with it.*

*But then you come up against the Lure of the Pedant. Which means you have no choice but to tinker with it. Come what may.*

## IS GOD AN X-BOX?

*This was a rather pleasant meeting in which we discussed the joys of playing computer games. It was a subject I enjoyed talking about because, although I wasn't an avid gamer, I did tend to spend far too much time playing them.*



I read somewhere that Pixar studios have developed computer programs using mathematics and algorithms to create the physics of the real world. So much so, they're close to recreating the complexity of the world around us. A situation described as 'mind blowing.' But, whilst this referred to the virtual reality produced by Pixar's computers, I think there's something even more mind blowing. I'm referring to the fact that this makes you wonder if *we're* part of a computer program. It's a rather disturbing possibility. After all, just imagine finding out you're a non-player character in a massively multiplayer celestial role-playing game. Now that would be a shock to the ego!



So we're back to the 'puppet-on-the-string' scenario.



Don't knock it, boys. Some people like that sort of thing.



Milton's still against this theory and I'll see if I can soften the blow. In the meantime, I want you to picture the scene: its late afternoon on a hot summer day. Weighing 18 stone, she swaggers down the street. She's white and in her mid-30's. Barely literate with a short fuse, a foul mouth and a propensity for alcohol, she's the archetypal slapper. Her name is Persephone and right now she's fighting for more turf. Yesterday, dressed in a judge's robes and sporting a halo, she despatched a group of Ninja warriors

to the Great Dojo in the Sky. Armed only with a razor sharp Katana, they stood no chance against her mini-gun that spewed out lead like a fireman's hose spews out water. They dropped like flies in an insecticide factory. But today she's dressing down. Today Persephone wears skin tight Lycra pants and an equally tight vest top sporting a gaudy motif. The rolls of fat make her look like a female version of the Michelin Man. But it's not her clothes or her clinically obese figure that make her stand out. It's the Pimp Slap.



What the fork is that?



The Pimp Slap is a giant foam hand, like an oven glove. A chubby hooker is plying her trade at a street corner. As Persephone walks past she elbows the hooker out of the way. The hooker protests at this rude behaviour. Whereupon Persephone squats and pretends to take a dump. This proves too much and the hooker advances, fists raised. But, before she can lash out, Persephone's Pimp Slap hits her, hurling the hooker's rotund frame at least 30 feet into the air. She lands in the middle of the road like a sack of potatoes and is run over by a 10-ton truck.



*Holy Dogsheet!* Persephone sounds like my kind of woman. Hell! I want to marry her and raise children. Who the fork is she?



The lead character from a computer game called *Saints Row 2*. Persephone is the name I chose for her. Mainly because she was nothing like what you'd expect a female called Persephone to look like. And in *Saints Row Three* I've created Adolf Hitler. The only problem is his voice. He either talks with an America accent or he sounds like Michael Caine. Then there's *GTA4*'s Niko Bellic who I had ritually disposing of men with mental health problems using an iconic Russian rocket propelled grenade launcher in *GTA IV*!



The Marines are looking for people like that. It sounds like you enjoy playing computer games.



The so-called 'sandbox' games are my favourites. Within certain limits, you can do what you like in them. For me, they're closer to what we call the real world. Unlike those games where you have to follow the storyline.



Here comes another of Mister Peckerhead's computer analogies. Let's just hope those maggots realise it *is* only an analogy. There are many, many, gullible individuals out there. So some retard might decide they want to be more like a computer. So they get a laptop adaptor, plug it in, and stick the other end in their asshole.



Mmmm! You really think so?



Like I've said a number of times. The idea that the universe is a computer isn't new. And this isn't some crackpot theory, either. Some scientists have also suggested it. Not to mention the eminent Oxford philosopher Nick Bostrom. He wonders if we're living in a computer simulation. And I'm quite sure he was sober when he came up with it. Another scientist believes that mathematics powers the universe. And we know that mathematics also powers computers. So we Messiahnists are in good company.



So if any corksucker tries to tell us we're crazy, we can tell them the Eggheads must be crazy too.



I recall reading somewhere that one day our computers will be able to create conscious non-player characters. The people in our games will be alive! This begs the question. If we can do it, then so can someone or something else! Adding yet more weight to the this-is-a-simulated-virtual-reality argument. Even weirder, what if we're *already* doing that? What if the characters in our games are already conscious? But at such a minute level they can't communicate with us. Can you imagine it? Those poor sods in *Gears of War*, for example. Doomed to fight these mutated monsters in conditions that would make Stalingrad look like the Queen's Garden Party. And I can just picture them talking amongst themselves when they take a rest. Wondering how they got there. For a start, they'll have been born as full grown adults. Weighed down with enough equipment and body armour to bring a normal man to his knees. Fortunately for them, Mother Nature, (us), gave them bodies that put Schwarzenegger and Stallone to shame. So there they are with no past, no parents, no home and no forking future. Apart from shooting these mutated locusts. They must think the Devil created them. Satan is alive and well and working at *Epic Games*.



*Bullsheet!* They don't care. They're grunts. They're like marines. They are hard as drill instructors. They love it!



If you're right then what about those poor women in *Saints Row 2*? The ones you force this Persephone to Pimp Slap. Does she *really* want to do that? When you turn the game off the poor girl might be riddled with guilt. And what about the poor drivers who run into those hookers? How many lives have you wrecked? LOL.



Yeah, let's face it, Mister Peckerhead. The Devil isn't only at *Epic Games*.



These things are best not thought about. In Messiahism we're talking cloud computing. This is not a machine in the conventional sense and it has an infinite lifespan. And infinite memory. It operates at the speed of light. In fact, it might turn out to be even faster! Who knows? From now on I think we can start trying to tie everything together.

*What a great opportunity to resume playing my favourite games! But I have a confession to make...I cheat. For three very good reasons. At least I think they're very good. Number One is it allows me to indulge in the art of hacking. Now these days hacking has a bad name. Although many would class them as anarchists, I must confess I'm a fan of the group Anonymous. And those Guy Fawkes masks lifted from the film 'V' add a nice touch of style. The group called Lulz Security have a logo that reminds me of my favourite German artist of the 1920's, George Grosz. Although not as good as Grosz's work, it has a similar look. So I rather like them as well. But, back in the early days of computing, hacking was a benign hobby. IT students would hack into the university's computer to get it to do things it didn't normally do. I consider game hacking to be in the same category. It doesn't harm the game, (well on rare occasions it causes them crash), and it makes the game do things it's not supposed to do. And I'm not alone. Apart from other dedicated cheaters, the developers use cheat modes in order to test the game.*

*The second reason is an egotistical one. With God mode enabled you can't get killed and you become invincible. Believe me, invincibility is a very good feeling to have. And if I can't be invincible in real life, computer games will just have to do. It also helps in the field of anger and frustration management. Having to start the game again each time you die can be pretty annoying. Especially when you lose the goodies you've collected. It's even more frustrating when you lack even basic coordination. This means you can die a lot. Add the fact that you can have super strength, abilities and weapons, and you begin to learn just how pumped up a deity can get. In GTA IV I had, amongst other things, super jump, which enabled me to leap tall buildings Superman style and run at over 100 miles an hour. And I could make nearby cars explode and pedestrians suffer spontaneous human combustion without lifting a finger. To all intents and purposes I was a Superman! And, in Dead Rising 2 I could slaughter no end of zombies without raising a sweat or getting a scratch. I could even have them all fall dead and travel*

*around the malls on a 'shop until you drop' mission. Except that I never dropped.*

*The third reason I cheat is because I'm hopeless at games. What has this to do with Messiahism, you may ask? Well, it's sometimes hard to tell the difference between the reality outside the monitor and the virtual reality inside. To us Messiahists, computers are sending out a simple message: we also live in a virtual reality that's been constructed for us. But by whom? That 64,000 dollar question still remains to be figured out...*



## THE UNHOLY CATECHISMS OF MESSIAHNISM!

*The idea of mimicking traditional religions by including catechisms appealed to us. So at this meeting we devilishly constructed some.*



I imagine those Religious Nuts won't be very happy when they find out we're copying them by using catechisms. Some of the less charitable amongst them will suspect we're taking the peace.



That's because we are.



We needn't worry. The methods used by the Spanish Inquisition are now seen as barbaric. So we're not likely to be dragged into some dungeon and stretched on the rack. Or end up as a human pincushion inside an Iron Maiden.



I'd like an Iron Maiden to end up inside me. Steve, Dave, Adrian, Bruce, Niko or Janick. In fact all of them! What a gang bang that would be! LOL.



I sometimes worry about you, Liz.





I don't.



That's a bummer. Working for the Spanish Inquisition would have been fun.



There's just our immortal souls to worry about.



So what? Satan will be open to negotiation. I'm a marine. We have supplied that motherforker with many souls.



I think we should have a catechism teaching caution. That's important. People must be told that Messiahism is based on speculations, not fact. Intelligent speculations, but speculations nonetheless. Messiahism recognizes that humans are fallible. So nothing they create is ever perfect. That means there are no perfect religions. All religions contain a mixture of truth and falsehood. And that includes Messiahism. But, unlike the Religious Nuts, Messiahists can choose what parts of their religion they want to believe in. And also mention the computer angle. That Messiahism can be upgraded.

*'What is Messiahism?'*

***'SIR, MESSIAHISM IS A RELIGION FOR THE COMPUTER GENERATION, SIR!'***

*'What is Messiahism based on?'*

***'SIR, MESSIAHISM IS BASED ON SCIENCE, SIR!'***

*'And what are those other religions based on?'*

***'SIR, THOSE OTHER RELIGIONS ARE BASED ON FALSE HOPE, SIR!'***

*'Why is Messiahnism like a computer?'*

**'SIR, WHEN A THEORY IS PROVED OR NEW SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERIES ARE MADE MESSIAHNISM CAN BE UPGRADED TO REMAIN AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF RELIGION, SIR'**



Messiahnism: religion at the cutting edge. What a great slogan. Then we make it clear that we're not creating some mystical paranormal bullsheet. And if anyone's expecting ectoplasm, tea leaves and Tarot cards they're going to be disappointed. The stars don't rule our lives, science does.

*'Are we just a bunch of cranks preaching some paranormal bullsheet?'*

**'SIR, NEGATIVE. WE'RE JUST PLAYING AROUND WITH THE SAME IDEAS THE EGGHEADS PLAY AROUND WITH, SIR'**

*'So what about those peckerheads hoping for ectoplasm, spirit guides and Tarot cards?'*

**'SIR, THEY CAN STICK THOSE THINGS UP THEIR ASS, SIR!'**



Let's drop the catechisms. They sound like those messages you get in fortune cookies. Consciousness plays a vital role in Messiahnism. It was Sigmund Freud who attempted to describe consciousness. He divided it up into consciousness, sub-consciousness and unconsciousness.



Wasn't Freud the Egghead who screwed his mother?



I don't think he went that far. On the other hand, who knows what went on in that house? Perhaps he did. And perhaps it was the guilt that made him come up with the

theory that all boys are sexually attracted to their mothers. Maybe he was trying to make the rest of us share his guilt.



You could be right. And what about his anal fixation? *Jesus H. Christ!* According to him, not only did I want to stick my pecker in my mother, I also worshipped my sheet!



I can confirm he doesn't do that. LOL.



I sense a lot of anger here. You spent some time in a psychiatric wing, didn't you?



Yeah, and the shrink was a Freudian analyst.



You know how they train them? They undergo Freudian analysis themselves. Now it would be fine if Freud had been normal. But this guy was screwed up. I read that not only was he a cocaine addict, but he also falsified his own data. As for the nature of consciousness. I'm not only talking about *individual* consciousness. Messiahism assumes there's a state of pure consciousness which is the same for all living creatures. And I'm going to go for the energy theory. We know that energy comes in different forms. Mechanical energy, electrical energy, chemical energy...



Sexual energy.



My favourite kind of energy.



You can say *that* again! LOL.



I wouldn't know.



You can come along to watch if you like.



He might learn something. Or it might scare the candyass and he'll end up bathed in sweat. Like he usually does. *Holy Dogsheet!* His sweat glands must be work like a sprinkler system.



LOL. Whilst we're bathed in another bodily fluid.



I think I'll pass on that one. So Messiahism will add 'conscious energy to that list. And

this energy creates awareness, emotions, vision, hearing, and feeling. To placate Liz and the Lure of the Pedant we could also include sexual energy.

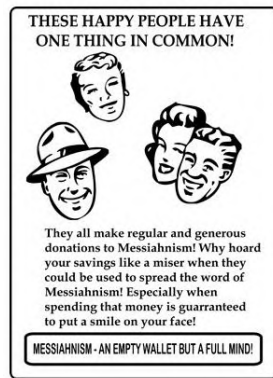


Throbbing energy. LOL.



*Jesus H. Christ! I'm getting a woody here!*

*At this point Liz and Milton stood up and walked out. Both looked flushed. I shook my head as Liz told me the invitation to watch still stood. Milton called me a candyass. But I had better things to do. I had Messiahism. I was determined to spend the next few days putting it all together. So that at our next meeting I could construct the basic framework of Messiahism.*



## THE BIRTH OF MESSIAHNISM!

*Slowly it all began to come together. Maybe it was the sea air or the walks along the beach. But by the time I called Milton to arrange the meeting the major pieces of the puzzle had finally fallen into place. It was epiphany. That moment when you begin to see the full picture. This final meeting took place at 12.35 pm on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, 2011. Well, part of it did...*



Before I begin I'd like to make a statement.



Go ahead.



If our religion takes off historians will regard this as the birth of Messiahism. I know you'll both agree that it certainly hasn't been an easy birth. It's also possible that it'll be a stillbirth. We smacked its bottom but nothing happened. But it won't be for want of trying. And, whilst the scientific community tries to come to terms with this tragedy, the genuine Religious Nuts will be quietly congratulating themselves. They won't make a song and dance about it because that's not their style. It's the Religious zealots who'll be dancing with joy. The ones who use religion to bolster their egos. The ones who need religion because they're inadequate.



Those motherforkers better not start dancing when I'm around. I'll adequate their inadequacies. I'll whip those corksuckers so hard they'll look like they've been through a meat grinder. You said on your mobile that you were ready to put it all together. So let's hear it.



Yes, we can't wait.



Messiahism teaches us that nothing can exist until we're aware of its existence in whatever shape or form. Therefore, to all intents and purposes, anything that we can never be aware of in any shape or form does not exist. Messiahism believes that for the universe to exist in its entirety, something must be aware of it. Not just the bits we're aware of. But the entire universe. We can call this a state of *absolute* awareness.



Hold on, Liz. Here comes Mister Smarty Pants!



We, on the other hand, have only limited awareness. We're only aware of portions of what absolute awareness is aware of. *Hang on!* This is starting to sound very pretentious. I'm no Egghead! Where's the humour? Where are the gags? The Lure of the Pedant isn't my only problem. There's also the Lure of the Clown. I just can't take anything seriously for long.



Then we're in a World of Sheet.



Not necessarily. Why don't you sell it as a joke religion?



By George! As Professor Higgins would say. I think she's got it!



I know that one! Rex Harrison! *My Fair Lady!* Audrey Hepburn sang, '*The Rain In Spain Falls Mainly On The Plain.*'



Actually, the rain in Spain doesn't fall mainly on the plain. It falls in the foothills. A Joke religion, eh? What a great idea.



Affirmative. The joke religion angle might stand a better chance. I also got a plan for those Religious Nuts. This is like a war and war is hell. We just leave the body parts of a few Religious Nuts in prominent locations. Like shopping malls and churches. Those other corksuckers will soon get the message. Or we could be like you. We could just roll over, spread our cheeks, and let those motherforkers give it to us up the ass.



You're joking, right?



Yeah, but I can dream. Okay, time to get this show on the road. No more interruptions. Just tell us what this joke religion called Messiahism is all about. And do it in your best Mister Smarty Pants style. You hear me? Don't you go candyassed on me, you corksucker. Imagine you're a superhero in one of those comics. It's a plane...it's a



bird...no, it's a mouth! It's Supersmartypants! His words are like inter-continental nuclear missiles! They strike his enemies dumb! Donkeys fear him because he talks their back legs off. And a two legged donkey is no forking good to anyone. Especially not to Jesus.



Gosh! I'll certainly try and do my best. Only this time I'll write it all down. Hopefully I'll have it finished by this evening.

*As I left the pub I spotted the Mad Vicar going into the chip shop across the road. So I sneaked past. Without Milton to protect me God only knew what he'd do to me. Back at the caravan I collected my notebook and pen and spent the afternoon on the beach putting it all down on paper. It was just after seven o'clock that night when I arrived at the Ffrith Hotel. Milton and Liz were waiting for me.*



Messiahism teaches us that a state of absolute nothingness can't exist simply because there's nothing there *to* exist. In fact a state of absolute nothingness can't even be imagined because once imagined it no longer consists of absolutely nothing. Absolute nothingness is a paradoxical concept that can twist the knickers of any philosopher and leave them breathless. Instead its opposite exists and this state Messiahism calls absolute *somethingness*. And it consists of everything that exists or can ever exist in any shape or form. In short, the bottom line is we exist simply because we have to exist and for no other reason.

This state of absolute somethingness is infinite and contains a state of absolute consciousness. And this state of absolute consciousness has self awareness and is aware of itself and everything that exists in any shape or form. Because without some form of awareness nothing would exist. The exact nature of 'somethingness' and 'consciousness' are unknown. They may never be known.

Messiahism teaches us that the universe or a possible infinite number of universes were created by a form of computer. But this is no machine. Again, it's exact nature is unknown. What we can be sure of is that it contains mathematics. Perhaps it's a form of mathematical energy. The nearest description would be a 'super-cloud' computer. Only this one doesn't have other computers hooked into it. This one uses matter itself. And,

in doing so, it rearranges matter to create the things we see around us. Like our computers, it has created a virtual reality. Messiahism believes this is the reason why physicist tell us quantum physics has nothing to do with reality. That's because quantum physics creates the reality we observe.

This cloud computer consists of simple algorithms. These are produced randomly and eventually – given infinity – they'll rearrange matter into every possible form. In the same way that a cloud computing program has created millions of virtual monkeys. These virtual monkeys are randomly typing away on their virtual typewriters. According to the creators of this program they've so far created 99.990% of Shakespeare's complete works. In an infinitely larger form simple algorithms have created the virtual reality we see around us. Including life and evolution. The latter isn't difficult because our computers can also create evolutionary systems. And we can even do the former! Albeit in a limited way. But that will change. In short, our computers and our scientific skills are merely mimicking the super-cloud computer. The 'deity' that created everything that exists. Only in a smaller form.

So where do we fit in to the scheme of things? If this is the ultimate Role Playing Game, are we merely Non-Player Characters, or do we have any control over what happens to us? It would seem not. If this is the ultimate RPG then we're under the control of the software. Some scientists already suspect free will is an illusion. So it may turn out that we *are* puppets-on-a-string. But Messiahism suggests a ray of hope. Not a very bright ray, but a ray nevertheless. And it concerns consciousness. The 'hard problem' as scientists and philosophers like to call it. Messiahism, however, likes to replace the hard with the simple.

Messiahism teaches us that individual consciousness is an illusion. That solipsism is the reality. That there's only one form of consciousness and that we all share it. At the deepest level we're one and the same. Bell's theorem states that all objects are connected non-locally, in other words, regardless of how far apart they may be. But whilst this can be observed in the smallest objects like particles, it remains hidden in larger ones. Hence the illusion of individuality. However, we're not very big in the scheme of things. So this connection can sometimes be observed. I'm referring to all those seemingly weird things people put down to paranormal gifts. They're not paranormal. They're natural. They momentarily reveal Bell's non local connections.

And what machine code runs this super-cloud computer? It's called Chance. Chance uses mathematics and its algorithms create everything that can ever be created. How much more simple can you get? And running this machine code is our super-cloud computer. Like I said, it's not a machine. Like Chance it's also simple. Simple enough to qualify for a place in Messiahism. It's absolute infinity. Infinity to the power of infinity. It's hard drive is so big you can store an infinite number of things on it. Messiahism

teaches that within this infinity everything that could ever happen in any shape or form has *already* happened. Don't just take my word for it. Some physicists have expressed the same view.. The alternative is to prove that infinity doesn't exist. But infinity is beyond proof. So you're stuck with it, like it or not.

So let's explore the potential of this absolute infinity. A finite potential because of the Laws of Chance. Even so, we can forget red pill weird. This means that if something has more than a zero chance of happening then, within infinity, it's already happened! And just imagine how weird something that only had a *minute* fraction of happening would look like. But the chances of this particular universe existing would certainly be more than a fraction of one. Within this infinity there's no past, no present and no future. Time no longer exists. Not only our present lives but every possible variation of those lives has already occurred. We've already exercised all the free will we're ever going to get. And made all the decisions we could ever have made. So the lives we're living now have already been lived. And because we can't experience infinity we're simply not aware of that.

Reincarnation? Chance tells us that in a state of absolute infinity reincarnation must exist. Eventually Chance must create a set of physical laws that allow reincarnation. It has infinity to do so, no matter what the odds. So, in some virtual universe, there must be reincarnation. Is it this one? Were all those recorded cases of reincarnation simply imaginary? Even though some of them seemed difficult to explain. Or were they created by Chance? What about *déjà vu*? Is that caused by a loop in the programme? One that means we're reliving every possible variation of our lives? And this is just one of them? Only we've had the memory of our previous life wiped out? Except that small traces still exist. Because Chance had made it so. And we can be sure there's a universe where memories are *not* wiped out. Universes consisting of Groundhog lives!

Finally, what could this state of absolute consciousness look like? If absolute consciousness can observe everything there is to observe then it must also be able to do the opposite. Observe only *parts* of everything. Which is the state *we* find ourselves in. We're the mirror image of absolute consciousness. But we can try to imagine what absolute consciousness may be like. Try this thought experiment. Just pretend you're suffering from total amnesia. You have no memories at all. What's left? Just a state of empty consciousness. This would be our *real* self. Except that absolute consciousness is filled with every possible memory, image and experience. All in one huge lump. Data from the past, present and future. Probably too complex, so the only way to make any sense out of it is to look at it in individual bits. A task that involves sensory data from *all* living creatures, not only us humans. Okay, that's the lot. Did I miss anything out?



LOL. There were no jokes.



They come in the extended edition.



You didn't mention intelligence, Mister Peckerhead. Some of us have it, you know.



Yes, and it's just another form of artificial intelligence created by Chance. And our computers will eventually be equally intelligent. I'm not sure we can create a more intelligent machine. That sounds like a contradiction in terms. Like an idiot teaching someone to be a genius. Computers may be faster than we are. But it's the application of that speed that matters. But my mouth is as dry as the Sahara Desert and I need a drink.



*Hey!* Wait one. Before we finish, here's a thought for all those computer gamers out there. What's the chances there's a planet earth where the characters in games like *Gears of War* are conscious? Because if the chances are even the smallest fraction higher than zero, then that planet *will* exist. There it is. Somewhere in infinity those grunts will be laying their lives on the line for some corksucker who isn't fit to lick their boots. And what if it's *this* planet?



Thanks, Milton. You have just turned Messiahism into the religious equivalent of the Nazi Party.

*And that was it! Milton and Liz seemed impressed, although Milton said it might need to be simplified so his novices could understand what I was talking about. In his words, it was time to put Mister Smarty Pants to bed and call for Simple Simon. I told him I'd work on it. At the time of writing there's been some alarm amongst scientists when an experiment appeared to show particles had travelling faster than the speed of light. And this had Einstein spinning in his grave so fast he could have generated enough electricity to light up a small town. One scientist even said he'd eat his underpants on TV if it was true. Let's hope that if the speed of light can be broken there are no skid marks in them! (Actually, let's hope there are.) The alternative explanation is that these neutrinos have travelled through another dimension. Could it be the hypothetical inner dimension where we see our dreams, hallucinations and optical illusions? That's another avenue Messiahism can consider. But I leave that to my disciples. I've laid the groundwork and now it's up to them. Like the Religious Nuts God, I'm a couch potato.*

## Update

A recent article in the New Scientist reported that the multi-universe theory was becoming the most popular one. Not only that, it seems to be becoming more likely that the universe we inhabit could be a computer created virtual reality. The concept of the universe being created from nothing was also gaining ground. The same idea occurred to me when I wrote that article for Graham Hancock. It seems the Eggheads are only just catching up. One intriguing factor is that mathematics starts from zero. We could use machine code as analogy for the creation of the universe. Zero being nothing and One being something. But I'll leave this to you.



**THE END**



*The Author relaxes after a tough meeting.*

### **About the Author**

Having been a published writer for over 30-years I've finally decided to go into semi-retirement. During that time I've worked mainly in comics – in fact I started working in comics when I was a child. We were that poor my parents couldn't afford to buy me any comics so I had to write and draw my own. I've also worked in TV and radio and spent two years as a gag writer submitting jokes to a number of comedians, even when they begged me not to. On top of this I've worked as a scriptwriter for animation studios and enjoyed the odd foray into gonzo journalism. Albeit without the late Hunter S. Thompson's voracious appetite for mind bending substances. (Well, let's just say I didn't take quite as many as he did).

Potential recruits might like to go to the “Corps of Marine Trained Messiahnists” page on *Facebook*.