A R T I C L E

Blake, Methodism, and "Christian Perfection"

By Christopher Z. Hobson

Christopher Z. Hobson (hobsonc@oldwestbury.edu), professor of English at SUNY Old Westbury, is the author of *The Chained Boy: Orc and Blake's Idea of Revolution*, *Blake and Homosexuality*, and *The Mount of Vision: African American Prophetic Tradition, 1800–1950*, among other works.

1 THIS essay argues that Blake rejected John Wesley's teaching of "Christian perfection" and examines the implications of this rejection for Blake's ideas of morality, conduct, and social and sexual freedom. More specifically, it intervenes in discussions of Blake's relation to eighteenth-century evangelicalism by proposing, at least on the issue of perfectionism as opposed to the persistence of sin, his greater affinity with the Methodism of George Whitefield than with Wesley's. I maintain that Blake's sense of sin was close to Whitefield's, though distinct, and also that he rejected claims of perfectibility, such as Wesley's, on the basis of this sense and because they provided justification for self-appointed elites. These concerns first become prominent in *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, despite some earlier foreshadowing. They exist in a productive tension with Blake's belief in the holiness of the body, one correlating with his sense of the redeemed world as a cooperative society of imperfect beings.

2 The importance of relating Blake's sense of sin and imperfection to evangelical debates on this topic goes beyond simply correcting one-sided views of his intellectual affiliations. Wesley's perfectionism contains—seemingly paradoxically, given his relatively open-minded and experiential approach to theology—a deep core that historically gave rise to arrogance, moral condemnation, and a pharisaical self-described sanctity in the religious culture of the next two centuries. Blake's opposition constitutes an early warning against these trends, as well as, implicitly, later secular perfectionisms. While my focus is on Blake's rejection of perfectionism, this larger context, to which I return in my conclusion, is the reason his stance has importance for general culture.

3 In arguing for Blake's affinities with Whitefield rather than Wesley, I do not try to situate him biographically within a Whitefieldian milieu, to demonstrate his extensive knowledge of Whitefield's or Wesley's works, or to show direct influences on his writing. I stress, indeed, that he probably had little such knowledge and took his ideas about both figures from general public awareness. Rather, I examine Blake's theological ideas about sin, its persistence, and the impossibility of perfection, as expressed mainly in *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, and calibrate their basic similarities and differences with Whitefield's and Wesley's views. I first provide necessary background on each leader's relevant beliefs, then examine key Blake statements and narrative episodes. Finally, after comparison and analysis, I look at the afterhistory of the perfection doctrine and assess the continuing significance of Whitefield's and Blake's opposition.

4 My argument goes against a prevalent, though not consensual, view that Blake's main evangelical sympathies were with Wesley's Methodism and that his touchstone issues were the related ones of predestination and of possible redemption rather than foredoomed damnation for sinners, ideas that interpreters link with Wesley and Whitefield respectively. Morton Paley, for example, comments about Blake's encomium to Whitefield and Wesley in *Milton* (22[24].55-23[25].2, discussed later): "Presumably, Whitefield was raised up by Rintrah (Wrath) because he emphasized the Calvinist belief in the predestination of some to grace and others to damnation, while Palamabron (Pity) raised up the mild Arminian Wesley. … Whitefield's Calvinist predestinarianism would certainly have been unacceptable to Blake" (*Apocalypse* 76). Similarly, Mary Lynn Johnson believes that, theologically, the "Bard's Song" in *Milton* "revolves around" predestination, on which Whitefield takes "the Calvinist position" as against Wesley's view that predestination would be a "horrible Decree" (138, partly quoting Wesley's sermon "Free Grace"). Though neither makes these points as a general thesis, both Paley and Johnson plainly think Blake closer to Wesley than to Whitefield and view predestination as the decisive issue.[1] Two monographs on Blake's relation to Methodism, by Jennifer G. Jesse and Michael Farrell, propose Blake's affinity with Wesleyan Methodism. Farrell does so cautiously, noting differences as well as similarities and arguing only that "Wesleyan Methodism was a significant component" in Blake's theology (193). Jesse believes that Blake's use of the category of the Redeemed in *Milton*, with other similarities,

1. Johnson relies partly on references to *Paradise Lost* book 3, as discussed later. Neither her essay nor Paley's chapter covers *Jerusalem*.

would have been taken at least by contemporaries as "advocacy of Wesleyan theology" (191). In exceptions to this near consensus, Jon Mee posits Whitefield's primacy over Wesley in Blake's imagination, though in the limited context of the Hunt brothers' attacks on both Blake and Whitefield for "enthusiasm" (270-82, 291). Martha England, after establishing strong parallels between Charles Wesley's hymns for children and Blake's *Songs*, nonetheless finds their views opposed on most issues, and argues that the Wesley brothers' "doctrine of Christian perfection [is] incompatible with Blake's theme" in *Jerusalem* (106), an assessment similar to my own.[2]

5 Three weaknesses are notable in the prevalent view. One is overidentifying Methodism or evangelicalism with Wesley and so misreading resemblances between Blake and general evangelical belief as affinities with Wesley. Farrell and Jesse, for example, demonstrate several similarities they feel show Blake's closeness to Wesley, such as beliefs in regeneration, in the centrality of faith, and in dedication to evangelical witness. These were common, however, to all sides of the evangelical development, not specific to Wesleyan Methodism, and Jesse and Farrell do not show that Blake's treatments were closer to Wesley's than to other evangelical views. They devote little space to Whitefield or other non-Wesleyans. In considering sanctification and Christian perfection, they confine themselves largely to Wesley's views (though omitting important topics, such as his belief in a sudden or instantaneous "second blessing"), do not explain other evangelicals' objections to them, and do not mention alternative Calvinist and evangelical Anglican ideas of sanctification.[3] Further, discussions of Whitefield often overstress the formal importance of predestination in his theology and miss an emphasis on Jesus's all-accepting mercy in his pastoral and preaching practice. We will see that Whitefield's views exist on at least these two partly contradictory levels. Finally, many writers miss or underestimate the importance of rejecting perfectionism for Whitefield, for others who could not agree with Wesley, and for the later Blake. This issue, we will see, stood in the forefront of Whitefield's differences with Wesley and of Blake's late thought as a whole.

2. This chapter of England's study compares *Jerusalem* and Charles Wesley's *Short Hymns on Select Passages of the Holy Scriptures* (1762). Her broader thesis is that while the two writers are at odds on the "normal middle ground" of reading—for example, in opposing and accepting perfectionism—they are similar in the "longer view of art and life" in their ability to accept contradictions and their own imperfections (43; see also 100).

3. Farrell includes eight brief references to Whitefield and a few not indexed; Jesse provides a good brief discussion of the Calvinist and Wesleyan wings of the revival (185-88), but here and elsewhere says little about Whitefield. On Wesley's perfectionism, see Farrell 173-79; Jesse 225-28. See Jesse 235-37 on Blake and sin.

Blake and Evangelicalism

6 Blake's attitude toward the evangelical revival and its two main figures seems to have been an outgrowth of his own evolution toward a more spiritualized Christianity rather than of any specific engagement with the movement itself or with these leaders' writings. There is no record of Blake's attending Wesleyan or Whitefieldian meetings or reading either evangel's tracts or sermons. The only work Blake owned by either was a brief compilation, *Hymns for the National Fast, Feb. 8, 1782*, by John and Charles Wesley, which he did not annotate (Bentley 700), leaving his responses, or whether he read the book at all, open to speculation.[4] His knowledge, then, most likely came from general culture. Within overall public knowledge, Whitefieldian and Wesleyan Methodism were the key branches of the evangelical revival, far more widely known than the small, though at times vibrant, society of Moravians. Of the two, Wesley's Methodist societies numbered 72,376 members in England, Wales, Scotland, and Ireland in 1791, the year of his death, and 272,157 forty years later (Currie, Gilbert, and Horsley 139-40). But the major public face of evangelicalism was Whitefield, whom Mark Noll calls "the acknowledged prototype of the evangelical preacher, the only early evangelical at home in Scotland and America as well as England, and the prime mediator between evangelicals in established churches and those who were Dissenters" (155). Though he ceased building his own Calvinistic Methodist Association in the early 1750s, Whitefield routinely addressed audiences of twenty to thirty thousand in outdoor preaching throughout his career (illus. 1).[5] It was Whitefield, equally famed on both sides of the Atlantic, who, probably in Savannah in 1765, impressed Olaudah Equiano, who had "often heard of this gentleman, and wished to see and hear him," with the "fervour and earnestness" of his preaching (Equiano 132, 277n363). Such responses, and the power and attraction of his words, evidenced below, mark Whitefield as one of the great eighteenth-century divines.

7 Whitefield and Wesley's rift over perfection, or, as Wesley also termed it, entire sanctification, was one of their several theological disagreements. The two held distinct views of sanctification, the process of increasing devotion and goodness that evangelicals presumed would follow one's religious awakening. Either it was possible—gradually or instantaneously—to overcome sin fully and live without

4. The book is most notable for ostentatious loyalism in the context of the American war. Several hymns focus on redemption for sin (especially nos. 3, 7, 12) and one on Christian perfection (no. 6).

5. On the credibility of these numbers, see Boren; on the association and its discontinuance, see Dallimore 2: 157-58, 248-51, 300-02; Kidd 206-07.

1. Anonymous. "The Rev.[d] M.[r] Whitfield Preaching at Leeds, 1749." 22.1 cm. x 27.5 cm. British Museum. 1870,0514.2967. Image © The Trustees of the British Museum. All rights reserved.

sinful acts or thoughts, as Wesley believed, or it was not, but believers could pursue a gradual and imperfect sanctification through living by Christ's example and continually struggling against sin—Whitefield's view. Beginning in the 1730s, and especially after 1741, Wesley increasingly preached, though with significant qualifications,[6] that true Christians (meaning those who had experienced spiritual rebirth) could be "saved *in this world* from all sin, from *all unrighteousness* … [and] freed from evil thoughts and evil tempers," as he argues in his 1741 sermon "Christian Perfection" (*A Plain Account* 150).[7] Somewhat later, Wesley began arguing that sanctification, rather than proceeding by degrees from one's regeneration onward, as he had

6. The most important involve restricting sin to intentional violations of a known law; believers' retention of infirmities (defects in understanding, information, and the like), so that they could commit wrong acts without sinful intent; and Wesley's abandonment of an early view that newly awakened believers intuitively understand all that God requires. (On these points, see Chilcote 20-21.) These qualifications provide what might be called a defensive stance, useful in arguing against opponents, but Wesley's overall claims were more expansive.

7. I quote this sermon as condensed in *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1766), Wesley's redacted compilation of his writings on the topic up to its publication, because this collection represents his evolved views, had a quasi-official character, and eventually became official doctrine when incorporated (in its 1777 edition, very slightly revised and identical in the quoted passages) into the 1789 Methodist *Discipline* (Peters 33). For the original (1741) sermon text (identically worded here, but without *A Plain Account*'s italics), see Wesley, *John Wesley's Sermons* 84.

earlier stressed, could (though it did not always) occur through a second, conversion-like experience, an "*instantaneous change* [that] has been wrought in some believers." Through either modality, believers could live in "*perfect love*," which to Wesley was the "*essence*" of the doctrine. Though conceding that sin might be "only *suspended*," not "*destroyed*," that perfection was never complete but might always be extended, and that it might be lost and even regained (was "amissible"), he insisted that presently these believers were "cleansed from all pollution both of flesh and spirit" (*A Plain Account* 187, 188, 190). The idea of an accomplishable perfection in holiness, including its possible attainment in an instantaneous "second blessing" distinct from regeneration, became a core Wesleyan tenet—in Wesley's eyes God's "grand depositum" to the Methodists (Abelove 80) and, his best recent biographer judges, Wesley's "most distinctive contribution to the Christianity of his day" (Rack 552). Nevertheless, perfectionism remained deeply divisive. Many, especially Calvinists, saw the teaching as not just mistaken, but productive of spiritual haughtiness, or what the Anglican evangelical Calvinist John Berridge called "Such Pride! Such Boasting! Such Censoriousnes! Such Contempt of others!" (letter to John Walsh, Stark 151). Then and later, the doctrine led to tensions with Whitefieldian and other Calvinists, among Wesley's own followers, and within Wesleyan-influenced denominations.[8]

8 Whitefield was committed to the common evangelical belief in sanctification. Sin, he urged, could be "more and more weakened as the believer grows in grace, and the spirit of God gains a greater and greater ascendancy in his heart" ("Walking with God," *Works* 5: 25). But he saw sanctification as gradual and not complete until the moments before death,[9] and he rejected Wesley's perfectionism on the basis of a core belief in what he termed "indwelling sin."[10] Whitefield's repeated stress on this idea, with his overall Calvinism, may seem to suggest that his preaching would emphasize "the wrath of God in condemning the reprobate" (Farrell 9). In fact, indwelling sin acts as a humanizing element in his theology. Believers' continual buffeting by sinful thoughts, and perhaps acts, was for him a given and a fact of his own life: "I can say that I cannot pray but I sin," he testifies in one sermon. "My dear Friends, I have paid dear for backsliding" (*The Method of Grace* 14, 23). But, Whitefield stressed repeatedly, this inevitability was countered by Jesus's boundless mercy to those who turned to him in fullness of heart. Though he did not omit the dangers of hell, Whitefield centered his teaching on the certainty of mercy once the sinner made this turn: "Let indwelling sin be your daily burden; and not only bewail and lament, but see that you subdue it daily by the power of divine grace. … Remember that … Christ having once loved you, will love you to the end" ("Christ, the Believer's Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption," *Works* 6: 202). He hammered at the arrogance of self-perceived holiness and the rightness of laying one's sins before Christ, as in "The Pharisee and the Publican," in which he narrates the story from Luke: "Methinks I see him [the publican] standing afar off, pensive, oppressed, and even overwhelmed with sorrow; [until] with a broken and contrite spirit, he cries out, 'God be merciful to me a sinner.' [Luke 18:13] This man came up to the temple to pray, and he prayed indeed. And a broken and contrite heart God will not despise" (*Works* 6: 43-44). So, in a letter, Whitefield advises a noble correspondent writing on behalf of her sister, "Be pleased to inform her Ladyship, that her Saviour entreats and commands her to come just as she is, and to accept of salvation as a free-gift" (*Works* 2: 237).[11] This was Whitefield's preaching and pastoral emphasis throughout his life.

9 Both Wesley's and Whitefield's views of sanctification interact with their basic theologies, though in somewhat divergent ways. For Wesley, the connection is relatively direct. His Arminian view of salvation rejected the Calvinist tenets of God's preselection of the elect and of irresistible grace (sinners have no power to come to Christ, but are chosen). It was essential for Wesley that all could potentially find grace and that all could freely choose or reject it, or later fall from it. There was, then, no ultimate surety of salvation except increasing sanctification, and so only entire sanctification provided an essential, though tentative, assurance of security. For Whitefield, an evangelical moderate Calvinist, the links to his general theology were more complex and partly contradictory. Whitefield accepted the Calvinist

8. Besides dissents such as Berridge's, perfectionism prompted extreme claims by some Wesleyans, notably George Bell's (and possibly Thomas Maxfield's) preaching of Adamic innocence and imminent apocalypse in London, 1762–63 (Abelove 93, Stark 126-27, Newport). Many Wesleyans found the teaching difficult to accept or adhere to (Abelove 90-93); see John Walsh's testimony of repeatedly experiencing but losing assurance of perfection, and finally rejecting the doctrine (Stark 129-51). On nineteenth- and twentieth-century sequelae, see briefly below; Peters; Synan.

9. Besides the quoted sermon, see, for example, "On Regeneration" (*Works* 6: 264-66) and "Christ, the Believer's Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, and Redemption" (*Works* 6: 191-93, 194, 198-99, 202).

10. Whitefield took the phrase from John Owen's *The Nature, Power, Deceit, and Prevalency of the Remainders of In-Dwelling Sin in Believers* (London, 1675). Whitefield also used "in-being of sin" (for example, *Works* 6: 194).

11. Quotations in this paragraph refer to different phases of salvation—two to initial conversion or "justification" ("Pharisee and Publican," letter) and the others to sanctification and final assurance, but the attitude toward Jesus's love is consistent for all. My attention was drawn to Whitefield's letter by its quotation in Dallimore 2: 277.

tenets of unconditional election, limited atonement, and irresistible grace—God preselects only whom he pleases for grace, of all undeserving sinners, and without merit of their own; Christ died only for these, the elect; and God's selection falls on them without and even despite their will. These beliefs allowed him to affirm a certainty of final salvation ("the perseverance of the saints") while recognizing what he felt was an essential element of human experience, our continual, only partly successful, struggle to overcome or minimize faults and be better than we were. Yet these formal tenets clash, at least in part, with his preaching call to "come," as stated in the letter just mentioned. Whitefield could, indeed, in preaching approach something close to Wesley's idea of a prevenient grace that frees the sinner to choose. In "The Good Shepherd," his last sermon in London (1769), the sheep are God's because they are "enabled in a day of God's power *voluntarily* to give themselves up unto him" (*Eighteen Sermons* 354-55; my emphasis). Further, despite his acceptance of Calvinist views in and after 1739–40, Whitefield retained through later life an early emphasis on free grace, in the sense of a sure response of grace to an appeal made in earnest.[12] Addressing "all ye that have hitherto neglected to behold this Lamb of GOD by Faith" in a 1753 sermon, he exhorted, "Look unto him and you shall yet be sav'd; His Heart is open, and his Arms stretch'd out ready to receive you" (*The True Nature* 24-25). There was thus a considerable element of free choice in Whitefield's thought, despite his formal endorsement of unconditional election.

10 Whitefield's 1740 rejoinder to Wesley—his only effort at a systematic treatment of their differences—partly addresses this inconsistency through two considerations. First, we cannot know who is elected, and so must "preach promiscuously to all"; moreover, the evangelical revival itself is the means God has chosen to effectuate election and bring the elected to himself through grace ("A Letter" 59). Additionally, in several sermons Whitefield stresses election without merit as an antidote to arrogance and self-righteousness: "To check therefore all suggestions to spiritual pride, let us consider, that we did not apprehend Christ, but were apprehended of him" ("Satan's Devices," *Works* 6: 247). Nevertheless, these stipulations do not remove the difference between election by God's sovereign choice and the voluntary giving Whitefield stresses in preaching. Elsewhere, in fact, he bends the stick toward irresistible grace—a voluntary response is possible only if God "sweetly induces men's wills to comply" ("The Lord's Supper," *Works* 6: 31). Such inconsistencies show a serious, if not systematic, grappling with the problem. Finally, it is possible that Whitefield's adherence to unconditional election and limited atonement, as such, is unacknowledgedly experiential—that is, we know in experience that not all do choose to "come." But he never articulates such a point, which in any case does not remove the inconsistency noted here, one Whitefield never fully resolves.

11 This same inconsistency means, as well, that probably the greatest formal difference between Whitefield and Wesley, over accepting or rejecting Calvinist election, blurs in Whitefield's preaching, with its stress on Jesus's acceptance of all who seek him truly. Whitefield, indeed, seems to have felt that his and Wesley's views on election were compatible in practice, but those on perfection sharply at odds: "Though I hold particular election, yet I offer Jesus freely to every individual soul," he wrote Wesley in a 1741 letter proposing unity. "You may carry sanctification to what degrees you will, only I cannot agree that the in-being of sin is to be destroyed in this life" (*Works* 1: 331).

12 Though Blake may have had little detailed knowledge about either Whitefield or Wesley, he is likely to have had some awareness of Wesley's perfectionism, a doctrine widely known and controverted, including by an author Blake admired, James Hervey.[13] Besides any knowledge of others' criticisms, two factors in Blake's own thinking would have predisposed him against this idea and toward identification with Whitefield's rejection of it. The first is his preoccupations in *Milton* and *Jerusalem* with Deism and what he saw as its belief in "Natural Morality" (*Jerusalem* 52), as well as with the "Elect," in *Milton*, as perpetrators of social ills. I will argue that Blake associates Christian perfection with both of these perceived evils. Additionally, Blake's view of perfectionism may have been influenced by its prominence in St. Paul. Paul's condemnations of unconventional sex and view of the flesh as corrupt may have influenced Blake's formation of his counterposed ideas, as I have argued elsewhere.[14] Perfection is an equally central tenet for Paul, both overall and in opposition to what he sees as sins of the flesh. He exhorts his followers, "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God" (2 Cor. 7:1), and challenges backsliders, "Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. 3:3).[15] More generally, the Pauline epistles re-

12. On Whitefield's doctrinal evolution, see Olson; on "classical" and "moderate" Calvinism and their Wesleyan/Arminian alternatives, see Pinson, chapters 1, 2, 4.

13. *A Plain Account* went through five public editions in less than twenty-five years (editors' headnote, *Works* 13: 134-35; bibliographic stemma, *Works* 13: 577). See below on Hervey.

14. See Hobson, "Blake, Paul, and Sexual Antinomianism," for elaboration.

15. The context for Gal. 3:3 is a contrast between faith (as of the spirit) and law (as of the flesh), so the warning does not directly concern sex or the body, but it assumes a spirit-flesh opposition, explicit elsewhere

peatedly raise the possibility of perfection in the spirit and, as repeatedly, condemn the flesh; even when not linked to it explicitly, bodily and sexual restraint is part of Paul's idea of perfection. Wesley's statements on perfection, indeed, frequently cite Paul's—including 2 Cor. 7:1, a favorite[16]—indicating both Paul's centrality in the case for perfectionism and, also, why Blake might have questioned the idea based on his knowledge of Paul. Blake's treatment of the issue does not target Paul specifically; rather, his views of sex and the body, partly shaped in reaction to Paul's, form one of his main differences with both Wesley and Whitefield.

13 Blake's repudiation of perfection and associated ideas develops gradually. Perhaps implicit, the issue gets little emphasis at first. Urizen, for example, later associated with the closely linked idea of self-proclaimed holiness, appears in early work as a general oppressor, a holder of "assum'd power" who claims, "I am God. … eldest of things," and creator of the "Net of Religion" and "Tree of Mystery," among other roles (*Urizen* 2.1, E 70; *Ahania* 3.38, E 86; *Urizen* 25.22, E 82; *Ahania* 4.6, E 87). He may imply aspiration to perfection in wishing "for a joy without pain, / For a solid without fluctuation" and pleading, "Why will you die O Eternals? / Why live in unquenchable burnings?" (*Urizen* 4.10-13, E 71), but Blake does not pursue the idea. As late as 1804, indeed, Blake could refer to perfection in a fairly conventional way, saying in a biblically based compliment to William Hayley that his appreciation of Hayley's kindness "draws the soul towards … conjunction with Spirits of just men made perfect by love & gratitude" (letter, 14 Jan. 1804, E 740).[17] His criticism of perfection emerges with his espousal of Christian fideism and his attraction to evangelicalism. It does so in two phases: as an attack on claimed holiness as self-righteousness in *Milton*, with perfectionism implicated indirectly; and as direct opposition to and satire against perfectionism, and dramatization of its impossibility, in *Jerusalem*.

(for example, Rom. 8:8-13, Gal. 5:16), in which the flesh is the seat of sexual violation and general sin (Gal. 5:16-21).

16. See *A Plain Account* 138 (from a 1733 sermon), 161 (from 1741 Methodist conference minutes), 191 (in the conclusion, original for this work). See also *Works* 13: 65 (from "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," 1760); *John Wesley's Sermons* 67, 84, 155, 182, 363 (sermons of 1741 [two], 1746, 1748, 1763).

17. For the context of Blake's statement, see the full letter (E 739-40). The biblical context is eschatological: the "spirits of just men made perfect" (Heb. 12:23) are those of earlier witnesses of faith who become so at the eschaton (compare 11:39-40). The perfection of souls after death is standard doctrine, though Blake's idea that it might stem from "love & gratitude" is his own. The basic point remains that, at this stage, he is not attuned to the negatives he later sees in perfectionism.

The Evidence of Direct References

14 Turning to Blake's late works with this background in mind, we should see that while his references to the two evangels are few, Whitefield more than Wesley fires his imagination. Whitefield appears in three segments of *Milton* and *Jerusalem*, twice solo and once in company with Wesley, who is not mentioned elsewhere.[18] In the first episode, *Milton*'s evocation of the evangelical revival as a spiritual apostleship, Rintrah reports:

> But then I rais'd up Whitefield, Palamabron raisd up Westley,
> And these are the cries of the Churches before the two Witnesses
> ……
> No Faith is in all the Earth: the Book of God is trodden under Foot:
> He sent his two Servants Whitefield & Westley; were they Prophets
> Or were they Idiots or Madmen? shew us Miracles!
> Can you have greater Miracles than these? Men who devote
> Their lifes whole comfort to intire scorn & injury & death
> Awake thou sleeper on the Rock of Eternity Albion awake
> (22[24].55-23[25].3, E 118)[19]

The two stand here for selfless steadfastness and sacrifice and for spiritual resistance to "Self-righteousness" and "cruel Virtue" that work "To perpetuate War & Glory. to perpetuate the Laws of Sin" (22[24].43-45). If these specifics seem incongruous for the historical Wesley and Whitefield, who supported the crown (and Whitefield slavery)[20] and were morally restrictive, nonetheless Blake sees these as any spiritual revival's tasks. Whitefield's alignment with Rintrah, the more uncompromising brother, should be read not just in personal or doctrinal terms, but in relation to the task of witnessing against "the Abomination of Desolation" (line 49), essentially the blasphemous nature of both church and state.[21]

15 In *Jerusalem*, in the general framework of the need to respiritualize religion, Whitefield, with "Fenelon, Guion, Teresa, / … & Hervey," is among the ecumenically repre-

18. If we count individual references within these passages, Whitefield is mentioned five times and Wesley two.

19. The speech (22[24].29-23[25].20, E 117-18) is begun by Rintrah and Palamabron jointly, but in this section seamlessly shifts to Rintrah, then to the churches, then apparently back to Rintrah and Palamabron. Various interpreters identify the divisions differently.

20. See Pestana 92-97 for a summary; Dallimore 1: 207-08, 494-501 and 2: 219, 367-68, 520-21 for detail.

21. On this symbolic entity, see Rosso 18, 137-38 (on this speech), and 196-207 (on uses in *Jerusalem*).

sentative guardians of Golgonooza's "Four-fold Gate / Towards Beulah" (72.49-51, E 227).[22] All favored a spiritualized Christianity. The first three affirmed an ideal of Christian perfection as full submission to or unity with God (rather than Wesley's idea of freedom from sin). Hervey criticized Wesley by implication in his pastoral dialogue with epistles *Theron and Aspasio* (1755), a work Blake had some knowledge of, and explicitly in *Aspasio Vindicated*, published posthumously in 1765.[23] Significantly, Blake's Whitefield here acts along with "all the gentle Souls / Who guide the great Wine-press of Love" (lines 51-52), a specification perhaps related to what we will see as Blake's implied revision of the evangel's ideas about sexual love.

16 Whitefield is present both by implication and explicitly in *Jerusalem*'s chapter prefaces. While the first preface, in religious terms, is perhaps most familiar for stating Blake's idea of forgiveness—"The Spirit of Jesus is continual forgiveness of Sin" (plate 3, E 145)—the words that follow, "He who waits to be righteous before he enters into the Saviours kingdom, the Divine Body; will never enter there," imply a rejection of achievable freedom from sin. Further, while Whitefield is not mentioned, Blake's next statements, "I am perhaps the most sinful of men! I pretend not to holiness! yet I pretend to love, to see, to converse with daily, as man with man, & the more to have an interest in the Friend of Sinners," recall Whitefield's avowals (above) and show a certainty of Jesus's acceptance close to Whitefield's. Taken together, the statements imply a view of sin as inborn and inescapable, not elaborated here, that Blake holds in common with Whitefield; these qualities are why one who waits to be righteous waits in vain and forgiveness is necessary. These pronouncements, in sum, replicate important parts of Whitefield's thinking, whether or not Blake had knowledge of them—though we will see that he did have some.

17 Chapter 3's preface, "To the Deists," expands on these points, saying in part, "Man is born a Spectre or Satan & is altogether an Evil, & requires a New Selfhood continually & must continually be changed into his direct Contrary" (*Jerusalem* 52, E 200). The three linked ideas here are that (1) what Blake takes as a Deist belief in natural goodness ("Natural Morality," same plate) is wrong because humans by nature are only Satans or Spectres, "altogether an Evil"; (2) goodness therefore is external to our nature and comes only from a change in this nature; and (3) "Man" (humanity) "requires a New Selfhood continually"—that is, re-creates it continually—so that we must "continually be changed" into our contraries—continually reborn, in the evangelical sense of regeneration. With differences, these ideas are recognizably akin to Whitefield's beliefs in the continuation of indwelling sin, even in those reborn, and in a continuing struggle to counter it, and are opposed to Wesley's affirmation of a gradual or sudden release from all sin.

18 The key difference between Blake and both evangels to note at this stage is that while Whitefield and Wesley believe in the imputation of Eve and Adam's sin to humanity, Blake rejects prelapsarian innocence. In *The Four Zoas* he implies, instead, that love and hate coexisted in a state of nature or early society: we first see Los and Enitharmon as "A male & female naked & ruddy as the pride of summer / Alternate Love & Hate his breast; hers Scorn & Jealousy" (9.23-24, E 305). But if love's presence as a capability in nature might seem to create a route to increasing sanctity, in the perspective of *Jerusalem* 52 it does not, because of the self-regeneration of selfhood, from which, Blake implies on this plate, only "the Religion of Jesus" offers an escape. In other contexts, Blake emphasizes not just religion, but also imagination and "expand[ed] senses" as ways to access the divine, but *Jerusalem* 52 takes the stark stance just mentioned, for reasons examined later.[24] Given the persistence of sin, it is logical that Blake, later in this passage, admiringly cites Whitefield's frank admission of sins: "Foote in calling Whitefield, Hypocrite: was himself one: for Whitefield pretended not to be holier than others: but confessed his Sins before all the World" (*Jerusalem* 52, E 201).[25] The comment shows both awareness of Whitefield's public persona and Blake's greater sympathy with Whitefield's attitude toward sinlessness than with Wesley's. By a different route, then—sin by imputation is for him abhorrent—Blake arrives at a position close to Whitefield's continuance of indwelling sin.[26]

22. François Fénelon (1651–1715), Jeanne Marie Guyon (1648–1717), and St. Teresa of Avila (1515–82) were Catholic, Whitefield and James Hervey (1714–58) Anglican.

23. In the first work, see particularly Aspasio's Calvinist stipulation, "Even sanctification, though it destroys the reigning, does not wholly supersede the polluting power of iniquity" (314; letter 7, Aspasio to Theron). In the second, Hervey says of Wesley's "favourite tenet, '*Perfection* in personal holiness,'" that "I know not any Protestant writer that pretends to maintain [it], yourself only excepted" (562, 568, letter 9; see discussion in intervening pages). In *An Island in the Moon*, Steelyard is satirized as unsure whether he has been reading *Theron and Aspasio* or *Meditations among the Tombs* (E 456), probably indicating Blake's awareness of the works' differing emphases. Blake lauds Hervey in his watercolor based on the latter work (1820–25).

24. See, for example, *Milton* 41[48].3, E 142 (faith); *Jerusalem* 5.20, E 147 (imagination); and *Jerusalem* 34[38].17-20, E 180 (expanded senses).

25. Foote accused Whitefield in a satirical play, *The Minor* (1760). For details, see Dallimore 2: 407-09.

26. On *Jerusalem*'s rejection of imputation, see Jesse 236.

The Evidence of Narrative Episodes

19 Narrative sequences in both *Milton* and *Jerusalem* dramatize the attitudes and clashing ideas just mentioned. Those considered here include the Mary-Joseph episode dealing with sin and forgiveness in *Jerusalem*; the three classes schema and, more particularly, the Milton-Satan confrontation in *Milton*, with some analogues in *Jerusalem*; and aspects of Los's contestation with his Spectre in *Jerusalem*. All involve the persistence of or struggle against sin and the continued necessity of forgiveness, as well as a repudiation of achievable perfection.

20 The first incident repeats and extends material from the chapter prefaces (*Jerusalem* 3, 52) in Joseph's account of pronouncements by Jehovah Elohim's Angel, speaking in Joseph's dream:

> Jehovahs Salvation
> Is without Money & without Price, in the Continual Forgiveness of Sins
> In the Perpetual Mutual Sacrifice in Great Eternity! for behold!
> There is none that liveth & Sinneth not! And this is the Covenant
> Of Jehovah: If you Forgive one-another, so shall Jehovah Forgive You:
> That He Himself may Dwell among You.
> (61.21-26, E 212)

Despite a complex narrative context, the statement reads as authoritative both because of the reported speaker and because of the amount of emphatic capitalization, unusual even for Blake. Doctrinally, it argues the universality and inevitability of sin and makes explicit the link between these and forgiveness implied in chapter 1's preface.[27] At the same time, salvation is conferred by "Perpetual Mutual Sacrifice"—by human acts, which Jehovah's covenantal agreement ratifies. Further, it is "without Money & without Price," repudiating the standard view that Christ's death discharges the penalty for sin, as well as, indirectly, Wesley's belief that entire sanctification is necessary for assurance of salvation. Mary's question to Joseph that prompts his dream narration implies the same point through biblical allusion: "Art thou more pure / Than thy Maker who forgiveth Sins & calls again Her that is Lost / … / … in the midst of his anger in furnace of fire" (61.6-13, E 211). Blake alludes to God's words to Jerusalem in Isaiah, a resonant passage for him: "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger …. I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction" (Isa. 48:9-10).[28] For Jerusalem the city, forgiveness was not conditioned on purity but on suffering endured. Individuals and communities, both Mary's question and the dream narration imply, enter Jesus's body without attaining sinlessness.

21 These doctrinal points are only half the story of the Mary-Joseph vision; the other half is its narrative context. It occurs within a triple framework of vision. In the fused contemporary and biblical existences of the poem's characters, the Daughters of Los and other unnamed daughters labor with "intoxicating delight" to create garments and furnishings "That Rahab & Tirzah may exist & live & breathe & love"—to give form to our world of degradation and oppression. In parallel, Jerusalem, though "Her Form was held by Beulahs Daughters," is inwardly "closd in the Dungeons of Babylon / … all within unseen," laboring at its "Mills" while Vala "triumphs in pride of holiness" at her despair (59.34, 43, E 209; 60.39-45, E 210). There, seen "faintly" (60.39) in a second level of vision, the Divine Lamb or Divine Voice tells Jerusalem, "Lo I am with thee always. / Only believe in me that I have power to raise from death / Thy Brother who Sleepeth in Albion," and continues, "Behold Joseph & Mary / And be comforted O Jerusalem" (60.67-61.2, E 211). The inmost vision that follows, then, is a type for comforting Jerusalem and for raising Albion from death. So, rather than involving personal salvation alone, and in parallel with Mary's echo of Isaiah, the vision's realizations of sin's universality, the illusory nature of holiness, and the consequent need for mutual forgiveness are those necessary for Jerusalem to endure and for the complex social being who is Albion to return from death to life.

22 That holiness and perfection are illusory, as implied in this episode, and that claims to them foster a spiritual pride that facilitates elite rule is one meaning of Blake's three classes categorization in *Milton* and the more complex plot thread that supplants it in *Jerusalem*. The "Three Classes" (*Milton* 2.26, E 96, and later) are generally understood as an inversion of Milton's language of election in *Paradise Lost*. Jesse and Farrell regard Blake's use of the category of the Redeemed, which broadens the Calvinist duality between Elect and Reprobate and parallels Wesley's belief in a free choice of grace, as evidence for Blake's Wesleyan affinities, as Johnson also does by implication. This point is misconceived. The category of the Redeemed is certainly effectually Wesleyan, though Wesley did not use this term, but it is also Miltonic. In *Paradise Lost* books 3 and 11, the Father speaks of repentance by persons to whom his "ear will not

27. See also "Mutual Forgiveness" as contrasted to "a Heaven in which all shall be pure & holy" (Erin's speech, *Jerusalem* 49.29, E 198) and as an aspect of Jerusalem (*Jerusalem* 54.4, E 203).

28. The phrase is as memorable for Whitefield as for Blake, though he gives it only a personal and not a social dimension; see his sermon on the topic (*Eighteen Sermons* 125-43).

be slow, nor mine eye shut" and reserves damnation for those who refuse "my day of grace" (3.193, 198); the Son twice calls the saved "my redeemed" (3.260; 11.43); and the narrator speaks of the Son as "intercessor" and mentions "Prevenient Grace" softening Adam and Eve's hearts, an Arminian concept that Wesley adopted in his own theology (3.219; 11.3, 19).[29] There are thus effectively three categories in Milton; Blake's three classes are Miltonic in origin, not Wesleyan; and his usage, rather than specific to Whitefield and Wesley's disputes, is part of his overall critique of Milton's theology.

23 In that critique, pertinently to the present topic, Blake's attack on election as Satanic and linked to social evil also associates purity and holiness, qualities that recall Wesley's perfectionism, with the Elect and Satan. Leutha, for example, though a not fully reliable witness, says Satan acts "in selfish holiness demanding purity / Being most impure" (*Milton* 12[13].46-47, E 106). Blake's Bard, similarly, foretells that the Elect will testify to having been saved "of Divine / Mercy alone! of Free Gift and Election" when "Our Virtues & Cruel Goodnesses, have deserv'd Eternal Death" (13[14].32-34, E 107). The statement affirms both that these Elect qualities are Satanic and that salvation comes through mercy and "Free Gift and Election" (God's choice), not merit—a jointly Calvinist-Arminian tenet that Wesley struggled to square with his impulses toward voluntarism. Blake's association of virtue, purity, and holiness with the Elect identifies a major set of Wesleyan ideas as among the evils of this class and inimical to (and their exemplars as saved by) forbearance and mercy.

24 Of interest here is Milton's face-off with Satan late in the poem. Among other purposes, Milton announces:

> I come to discover [reveal] before Heavn & Hell the Self righteousness
> In all its Hypocritic turpitude, opening to every eye
> These wonders of Satans holiness shewing to the Earth
> The Idol Virtues of the Natural Heart ….
> (38[43].43-46, E 139)

Milton largely repeats Leutha's terms but adds self-righteousness as the concomitant to self-attested holiness. As "Natural Heart" indicates, Blake's proximate target is his bugbear "Natural Religion," the attitudinal, if not doctrinal, outlook of the established church and the social elites it spoke for. But these are the manifestations of Satan's self-righteousness, not Milton's (as Blake imagines him). The words Milton begins with, "I know my power thee to annihilate / … & be thy Tabernacle / A covering for thee to do thy will" (lines 29-31), point to the corollary: Blake is also taking aim at claims of holiness within a religion that renounces the historical Milton's errors.

25 Satan, similarly, in response, hopes all things may join together "in Holiness / Oppos'd to Mercy, and the Divine Delusion Jesus be no more" (39[44].1-2, E 140). In light of the perfection debate, it is hard not to read such dramatizations as linking the illusion of perfection in holiness to an inner core of self-aggrandizing pride and to rejection of the mercy Blake sees as Jesus's essence. One might, of course, read the criticized attitudes as an inversion of the humility Wesley preached as part of Christian perfection; then one would expect Blake to link humility further with perfection, whereas he usually contrasts these qualities, as in his already quoted "I pretend not to holiness!" (*Jerusalem* 3). We should note, finally, that in this exchange Satan, as "Satan! my Spectre!" (38[43].29), is an aspect of Milton himself; this point will be taken up in conjunction with the Spectre of Los.

26 *Jerusalem*, which drops the three classes categorization but uses the narrative thread of Albion's sons in part to replicate the roles of the Elect,[30] joins pride and self-righteousness, already linked with holiness, directly to perfection. Within the lengthy narrative sequence ending chapter 1, leading from the evocation of Golgonooza through contemporary vistas of depredation to Albion's failed repentance and apparent death (14.16-25.16, E 158-71), Hand and Hyle, chief among the sons, speak to condemn "soft complacencies / With transgressors meeting in brotherhood around the table" and "sinful delights / Of age and youth and boy and girl" (18.14-17). They demand instead

> chambers of trembling & suspition, hatreds of age & youth
> And boy & girl, & animal & herb, & river & mountain
> And city & village, and house & family. That the Perfect,
> May live in glory, redeem'd by Sacrifice of the Lamb
> And of his children, before sinful Jerusalem. To build
> Babylon the City of Vala, the Goddess Virgin-Mother.
> (18.24-29, E 163)

Blake's furious satire against Hand and Hyle—amplified by the design including a nude couple sharing what may be

29. Johnson presents the Father's speech in *Paradise Lost* 3.168-216 as making a two-part division between the elect and obdurate "others" (Johnson 238; her term). She omits Milton's discussion of repentance and acceptance in lines 185-97. Farrell speaks of "Calvin, Milton, and Whitefield's essentially bipartite" view (152). See Coppedge 111-13 for Wesley's understanding of prevenient grace. See Farrell 149-53, Jesse 185-94 for their overall views of the classes.

30. "Elect" occurs thirteen times in Blake, all in *Milton*; "redeemed," "reprobate," and their derivatives occur largely there, and only there are the three linked in the machinery of three classes.

2. William Blake. *Jerusalem* copy E (printed c. 1821), plate numbered 18, detail. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection. B1992.8.1(18). Image courtesy of the *William Blake Archive*.

an open-mouthed kiss (illus. 2)—makes plain that debasement of forgiveness (that is, of "meeting in brotherhood" with transgressors)[31] and of everyday pleasures is the foundation for exalting "the Perfect" as a group. It becomes clear, too, that both acts are based in the theology of substitutionary atonement; that in real-life terms, this theology also includes willing or unwilling sacrifice of the Lamb's "children," ordinary humans; and that all this is necessary to the building of Babylon, Vala's realm. Finally, Blake's satire, unifying and extending *Milton*'s discussions of the Elect, implies that all these are facets of any idea of attained perfection.

27 A final key to Blake's treatment of perfectibility lies in *Jerusalem*'s plot thread involving Los and his Spectre, as well as the fate of the "Druid Spectre" in the poem's conclusion. These points require some elaboration. Blake's readers are familiar with his and his characters' descriptions of Spectres in *Milton* and *Jerusalem* as "the Reasoning Power in Man" (*Milton* 40[46].34, E 142);[32] yet they are more than this. Satan as Milton's Spectre, in the speech discussed above, signifies—besides the affinities to Wesleyan holiness already noted—"fear of death" and "abject selfishness" as against Milton's teaching of "fearless majesty annihilating Self," and represents, as well, the inner essence of Milton's own capacity to supplant Satan and "be a greater in thy place" (*Milton* 38[43].38-41, 30, E 139). Albion's Spectre is similarly comprehensive. In its self-described role as "your Rational Power O Albion," it tells him that the "Human Form / You call Divine, is but a Worm seventy inches long," but the narrator also says Albion's Spectre is "the Great Selfhood / Satan: Worshipd as God by the Mighty Ones of the Earth" and is "the Devouring Power" (*Jerusalem* 29[33].5-24, E 175). Spectres, then, are indeed naturalistic thought, but also fear, selfishness, thirst for power, worship of worldly power, malevolence, and more—in fact, all the evils in Blake's universe.

28 With these issues in mind, we can turn to Los's relations with his Spectre. Introduced in *Jerusalem*'s opening narrative (5.66-11.7, E 148-54), Los's Spectre represents much more than his or humanity's "Reasoning Power." It embodies, for example, the side of Los that is "indignant" against the misdeeds of Albion's sons and that questions the need to "forgive." It includes Los's "Pride & Self-righteousness," even his temptations to justify God's punishment of sin "upon his Altar" and to believe that God is "Righteous: … not a Being of Pity & Compassion" (7.26-27, E 149; 8.30, E 151; 10.39, 47, E 153). Spectres, then, are specific to the individual and represent whatever self-justifying thoughts and emotions—including, we will see, the sense of holiness—block the individual from the selfless dedication both Milton and Los affirm in confronting them. Los's Spectre comprises these and other temptations to admitting the world's ways of thinking into his own.[33]

31. If the transgressors meet among themselves, not with others, then they are not necessarily forgiven, but certainly tolerated.

32. See similar phrasing at *Milton* 39[44].10, E 140; *Jerusalem* 10.13-15, E 153; *Jerusalem* 54.7, E 203, etc.

33. Among writers who treat Blake's Spectres comprehensively, Edward J. Rose (1977) views them as doubles or doppelgängers, possessing multiple and varied negative aspects, and Los's Spectre, specifically, as an aspect or estranged portion of Los's mentality: "The Spectre's fury, resentment, and indignation … [are], of course, his own objectified" (133). Paley, in a 1968 essay, presents William Cowper as a source analogue for Los's Spectre, whom Paley calls "a Calvinist who believes himself irrevocably damned by a God of wrath" ("Cowper" 236). As Paley notes even in this article, the point does not apply to Calvinism in general, which stressed God's lasting acceptance of those who are saved. Cowper, indeed, understood that his conviction of being

29 Two facets of this presentation deserve notice, particularly in distinction to Blake's treatment of Satan as Milton's Spectre. First, Los's Spectre appears as an aspect of Los himself—not simply because we see him extruding from Los's back (*Jerusalem* 6.2-3, E 148-49), but also because we see the Spectre "shuddring, & dark tears ran down his shadowy face / Which Los wiped off" (10.60-61, E 154). We realize that they are Los's own tears and that the Spectre's face, though externalized, is his own (see also Rose 133). In contrast, while Milton early states, "I in my Selfhood am that Satan … / He is my Spectre!" and addresses Satan as "my Spectre!" (*Milton* 14[15].30-31, E 108; 38[43].29, E 139), he and Satan function as distinct beings with distinct histories. Milton seems to recognize Satanic qualities as potentialities in himself but not to see Satan himself as a portion of his own being. Secondly, and related to this point, in their confrontation Milton appears as having decisively rejected and triumphed over all that the Spectre/Satan represents. In this respect Blake's dramatization—especially as reinforced by Milton's visual apotheosis in plate 13[16] (illus. 3)—shares ground with Wesley's perfectionism.

30 In effect, while rejecting in Satan Wesley's emphases on purity and holiness, Blake upholds in Milton something very like Wesley's perfectionism in an inverted Blakean sense—Milton, not self-divided, is resolute in moral transgressiveness, majestic in self-sacrifice, ready to "put off / In Self annihilation all that is not of God alone" (38[43].47-48, E 139). Similarly, in his slightly later speech to Ololon, Milton declares, "The Negation must be destroyd to redeem the Contraries" and, as Spectre, "must be put off & annihilated alway" (40[46].33, 36, E 142). These are perfectionist views so far as they suppose it possible to "destroy" or "annihilate" the Spectre, though "alway" (all the time, always) may imply a repeated process.[34] By contrast, the negative qualities that Los's Spectre represents appear as parts of his "shadowy" twin and, we will see, are present throughout the narrative.

31 In their initial confrontation, readers know, Los subdues the Spectre, apparently decisively: "Groaning the Spectre heavd the bellows, obeying Los's frowns; / Till the Spaces of Erin were perfected" (*Jerusalem* 9.33-34, E 152). Yet the subordination is provisional. At times the Spectre functions as Los's agent, acting in his stead, for example, toward the Daughters of Albion (17.1-47, E 161-62). At others, he seems ready to rebel against Los, attack Albion, or both, as when Los feels his Spectre "rising upon me" and fears that it will confine Albion in a "Sepulcher hewn out of a Rock ready for thee" (33[37].1-10, E 179, at lines 2, 6).[35] The most significant later incident, both in substance and in influence on further developments, is the Spectre's role in Los and Enitharmon's quarrel over gender, female "Pride," and male "dominion" (87.16, 88.13, E 246; 87-88, 90-93 in general). Though Los and the Spectre have very recently been working together—"Alternate they watch in night: alternate labour in day" (83.79, E 242)—during the gender dispute the Spectre smiles "in mockery & scorn / Knowing himself the author of their divisions & shrinkings, gratified / At their contentions" (88.34-36, E 247). Clearly, too, both Enitharmon's assertion of pride and Los's of dominion—the latter highly problematic for interpreters of this episode—reflect the Spectre's influence.[36]

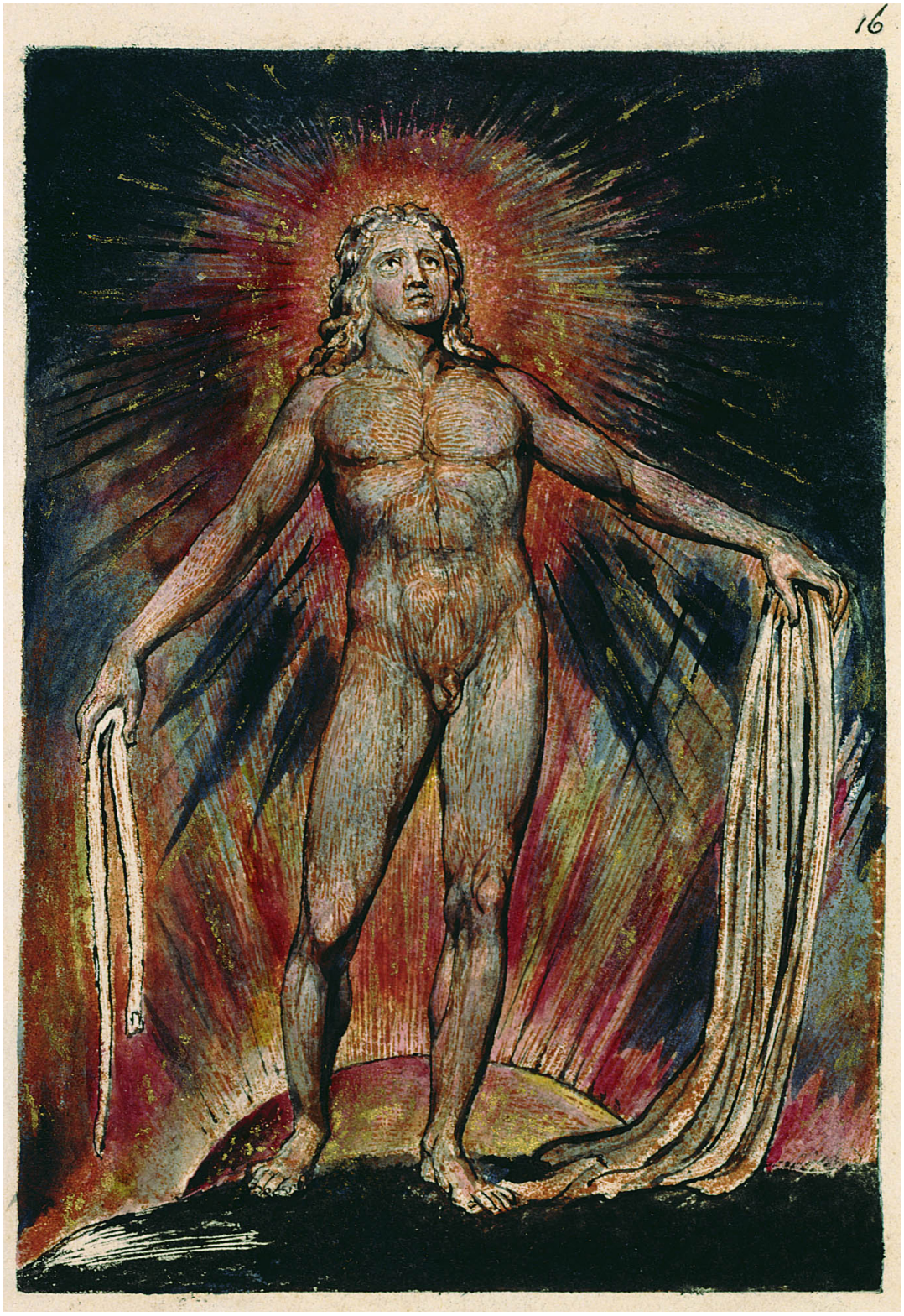
32 Beyond its immediate importance, the episode leads to the fuller clarification of Los's relation to his Spectre on plates 91-93. Here the Spectre, apparently feeling new power, builds "stupendous Works," including "the War by Sea enormous & the War / By Land astounding" and much else (91.32, 39-40, E 251; lines 32-41 generally). Ultimately, Los acts again against the Spectre, smashing his works, "alter[ing]" him, "divid[ing] him into a separate space," and commanding him to "put off Holiness / And put on Intellect" (91.50, 52, 55-56, E 252)—a sign that holiness is one characteristic of the Spectre (that is, of Los). The episode has been read as showing that "by isolating the spectre, Los keeps the Divine Vision" or that Los has "completely subdued" the Spectre, "integrat[ing]" it with his "imaginative self" (Rose 137; Paley, *Continuing City* 265, 254, see also 244). Yet in creating this "space," Los does not and, most probably, cannot separate entirely from or destroy his Spectre's influence. Rather, he continues to struggle against, but also accepts, that influence as part of himself.

damned after having fully accepted God violated Calvinist teaching (King 69). In *The Continuing City* (1983; see primarily 234, 244-55, 259-61, 264-66, 273), Paley drops the Calvinist designation and treats the Spectre as an externalized portion of Los. Both writers, as discussed later, believe Los fully subordinates or reintegrates his Spectre in the poem's climax, a view shared by many others.

34. Besides these thematic parallels, Blake's language is arguably closer to Wesley's in *Milton* than elsewhere. Farrell highlights, for example, Wesley's use of "self-annihilation" in a 1791 article as a parallel (175). Similarly, Wesley's stress on "regaining the whole image of God … having all the mind that was in Christ" (quoted by Farrell 174) is at least similar to Blake's "put off / … all that is not of God alone." These are general evangelically influenced ideas, however, rather than specifically Wesleyan. Whitefield speaks of our being "conformed to the divine image more and more" (*Works* 5: 27); Mee traces "self-annihilation" to David Hartley's 1749 *Observations on Man* (284-88); and Coleridge uses "self-annihilated" in "Religious Musings" (1794–96), line 43. Sanctification, we remember, was general evangelical doctrine; Wesley's unique teaching was entire sanctification, or perfection.

35. The speaker is first identified only as one among the Divine Family, but retrospectively as Los (lines 1, 10).

36. On the quarrel and its significance, see Hobson, *Blake and Homosexuality* 169-72; Connolly 210-11, 215-17, 229-30n9, partly in response; Rosso 182-92, including the larger context of plates 81-84 and 87-88 in relation to redemptive possibilities within Generation.



3. William Blake. *Milton* copy D (printed 1818), plate numbered 16. 16.0 x 11.1 cm. Library of Congress, Rare Books and Special Collections, Lessing J. Rosenwald Collection. Catalogue number 1810. Image courtesy of the *William Blake Archive*.

33 This point becomes clearer in the two plates following the Spectre's reorganization, which immediately precede the poem's closing events. Though the Spectre does not act overtly, Enitharmon's appeal to Los against dissolution in the body of Albion and her lament to Rintrah and Palamabron for her "little ones weeping along the Valley" (92.8-12, E 252; 93.11, 15, E 253) reflect the ongoing effects of the Spectre's sowing of division and the social consequences of its "stupendous Works" (91.32). Thus, the impulses it represented persist despite its sequestering. Los's indirect response, made to Rintrah and Palamabron, recognizes this fact and addresses the Spectre's continuing presence in himself and the world, as well as the comfort and strength found, even in this state, in Jesus:

> Fear not my Sons this Waking Death. he is become One with me
> Behold him here! We shall not Die! we shall be united in Jesus.
> ……
> if Bacon, Newton, Locke,
> Deny a Conscience in Man & the Communion of Saints & Angels
> Contemning the Divine Vision & Fruition, Worshiping the Deus
> Of the Heathen, The God of This World, & the Goddess Nature
> Mystery Babylon the Great, The Druid Dragon & hidden Harlot
> Is it not that Signal of the Morning which was told us in the Beginning
> (93.18-19, 21-26, E 253-54)

The lines contain a fruitful syntactic ambiguity, as so often in Blake: does "he" in line 18 mean the "Waking Death" (Spectre),[37] as normal sentence order suggests, or does "he is become One with me" refer to Jesus, otherwise not mentioned until the following line? In the latter case Los would be saying we need not fear the Spectre because of Jesus's presence. This reading is indeed possible. But both the Spectre's identity with Los's worst impulses throughout *Jerusalem* and the ensuing litany of still-present evils show that this reading does not efface the first. Rather, the crux opens up a more complex idea: the Spectre is present in Los and his sons *and* they can find help in Jesus against its lasting power. The Spectre, then, presently is and always has been part of Los; each of the cultural entities referred to has been in him the whole time.[38]

34 These words, Los's last before Brittannia's and then Albion's awakenings—indeed, Los's last in the poem—accept the presence in his consciousness not only of Deism, natural religion, and disregard of faith, but also of power worship, nature worship, and what Revelation calls the "fornication" of false religion, "Mystery, Babylon the Great," with "the kings of the earth" (Rev. 17:2-5). And, while Los presents their presence as a sign of expected "morning," the speech's placement suggests that accepting them is a condition of the awakening, or morning, that follows; we must accept our Spectres as parts of ourselves for the awakening to occur.

35 We are now in a position to understand the meaning of the moment in which, when awakened Albion confronts the Zoas,

> Urthona he beheld mighty labouring at
> His Anvil, in the Great Spectre Los unwearied labouring & weeping
> Therefore the Sons of Eden praise Urthonas Spectre in songs
> Because he kept the Divine Vision in time of trouble.
> (95.17-20, E 255)[39]

Urthona, then, becomes the one Zoa whom Albion does not "Compell" to resume his work (95.16) because Los has continued it. Los has been able to do this not through casting out or destroying the qualities his Spectre embodies but by contending against them continuously; he has maintained prophecy while struggling against his own doubt and temptations, and this, in life experience, is what "[keeping] the Divine Vision in time of trouble" *means*. In the terms used by the two great eighteenth-century evan-

37. Besides continued influence, various text parallels to the Spectre and others on plates 90-91 connect the "Waking Death" with Los's Spectre. Its identity as "Body of Doubt," for example, parallels the Spectre's "refusing to believe without demonstration" (93.20, E 253; 91.35, E 251). More circuitously, the Spectre's "stupendous Works" generalize the temple-building of "Giants of Albion," while the Giants' private "mocking [of] God" and profession of "Natural Religion" correlate with the Waking Death as avatar of Bacon, Newton, and Locke and its worship of the "Goddess Nature" (91.32, E 251; 90.58-66, E 250; 93.21-24, E 253-54). All three entities represent the same intellectual tendencies.

38. Compare the analogous episode in *The Four Zoas*, Night VIIa, in which Urthona's Spectre initiates reconciliation (VII.335-409, E 367-69). Here, no reconciliation is effected, only recognition of the Spectre's continuing presence.

39. The diction may mean either that Albion beholds Urthona, "the Great Spectre," within which Los labors, or that Albion beholds Urthona as an inward essence in Los, who himself is "the Great Spectre." Like Paley (*Continuing City* 271), I think the latter more probable, but the issue does not affect my argument. In the earlier passage with the same refrain lines, *Jerusalem* 43[29].28-44[30].15, E 191-93 (partly based on *The Four Zoas*, Night III), the social and psychic evils Enitharmon and Los's Spectre have witnessed and their patience under insult explain the accolade. Los's Spectre is called the Spectre of Urthona in *The Four Zoas*; in *Jerusalem*, the term appears only at 10.32, E 153, in that sense, and in these two passages, where it seemingly means Los himself. At 44[30].4, additionally, Los's Spectre is "named Urthona." Blake does not resolve these ambiguities.

gels, Los has not "destroyed" or "suspended" sin, nor been "cleansed of all pollution both of flesh and spirit" (Wesley, *A Plain Account* 188, 190), but, much more nearly, has "let indwelling sin be [his] daily burden," yet "subdue[d] it daily by the power of divine grace" (Whitefield, *Works* 6: 202).

36 Consistently with this argument, *Jerusalem*'s postapocalyptic coda raises the possibility, narratively and visually, that the ideas of sin, punishment, and (illusory) sanctity, seemingly overcome in the poem's conclusion, may recur even within Blake's imagined state of social and psychic reintegration. Narratively, we learn here that "the Druid Spectre was Annihilate loud thundring rejoicing terrific vanishing" (98.6, E 257). On first reading, the destruction of this newly introduced entity—roughly equivalent to a Spectre of human sacrifice and punishment[40]—may suggest a destruction of sin, contradicting my whole argument. On reflection, we realize that Spectres are not persons or actions (sins) but ways of thinking and feeling. The line therefore means, approximately, "The law and theology of sin and punishment are no more"—that is, the beliefs that sin is checked by punishment, possibly eradicable through self-restraint and Christian love, and, by implication, that some can live free from sin. The end of these ideas would mean accepting sin's inevitability and embracing the mutual forgiveness that the entire poem has taught, as building blocks of a cooperative community of imperfect beings.

37 These points also mean that the Druid Spectre's end can only be provisional. It is intellectually inescapable that, given the free play of thought Blake assumes in renewed existence ("They conversed together in Visionary forms dramatic," *Jerusalem* 98.28, E 257), such conceptions can recur; and Blake has only a tenuous trust in this postapocalyptic heteroglossia, together with mutual love and forgiveness, to rely on as bulwarks against those ideas' gaining the upper hand. Visual evidence, in fact, indirectly suggests this possibility. *Jerusalem*'s final pictorial tableau, on plate 100, shows Los's Spectre, in human form, obediently bearing Los's globe of fire, while Los himself rests with his sledge and tongs (illus. 4). The image has been seen as showing Los in harmony with his now-humanized Spectre (Rose 132). Yet this humanized image also recalls the repeated prior occasions on which the Spectre has acted at Los's behest while later again contending for dominance. Any apparent victory over the ways of thinking that Spectres represent, then, can only be tentative, won at the cost of continuing vigilance and perhaps renewed conflict. Such are the lessons of Blake's prolonged consideration of Christian perfection.

40. The word "druid" evokes such activities throughout the poem, in phrases such as "Druid Temples" (rocks, pillars, altars, etc.); in references to Albion's sons; in the repeated phrase "All things begin & end in Albions ancient Druid rocky shore" (27, E 171; 46[32].15, E 196); and, visually, in the triliths prominent in late sections (69, 70, 92, 94, 100).

Conclusions and Significance

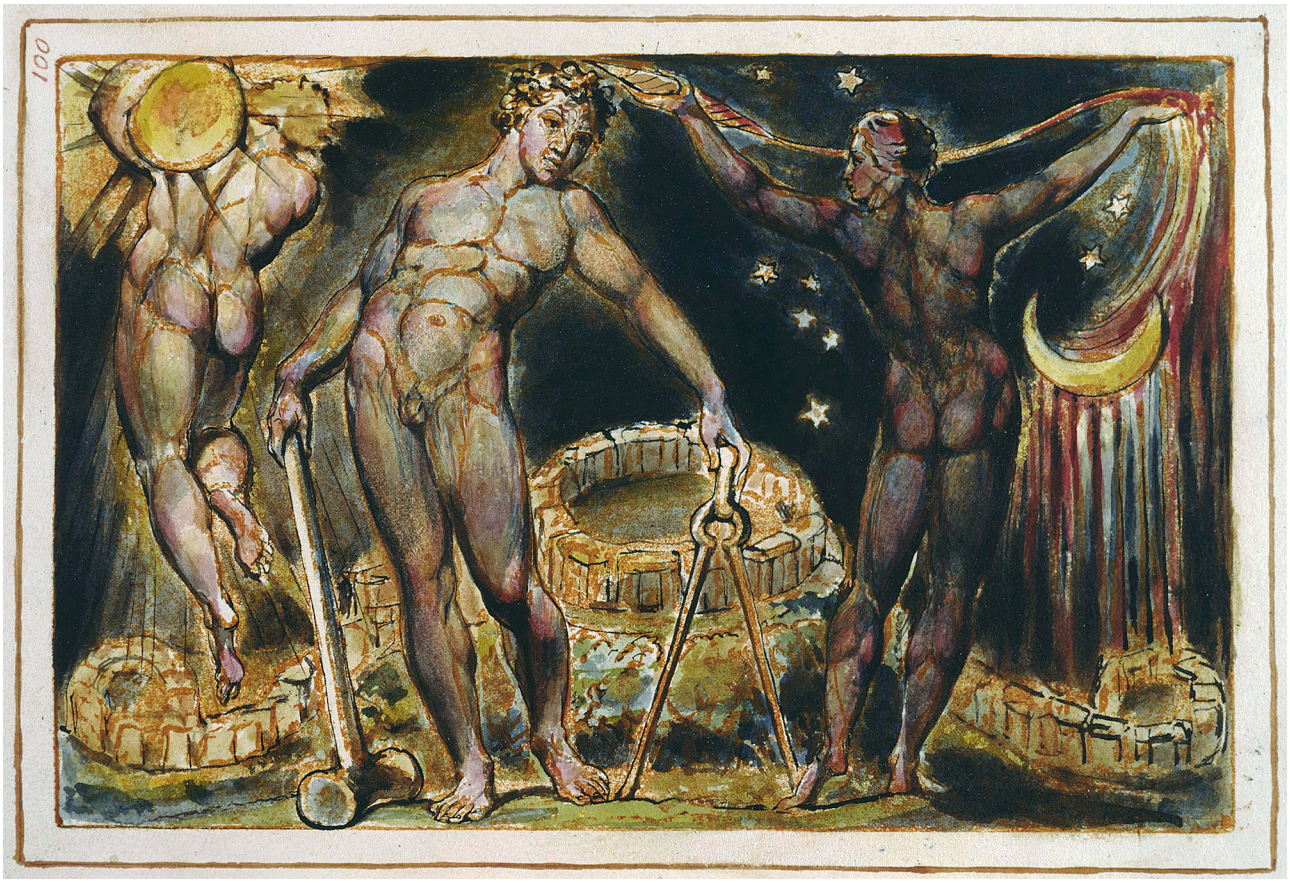
38 Though I have stressed the resemblance between Blake's and Whitefield's views on sin, and their common rejection of perfectionism, Blake's differences with both Whitefieldian and Wesleyan Methodism must be noted in fully assessing his late views of sin and renewed existence. Among various divergences,[41] the one nearest the core of Blake's thought concerns sexuality and, more broadly, everyday life; this issue will illuminate the paradoxes in Blake's ideas of sin and holiness that provide the key to his broad humanism. Both Whitefield and Wesley share a Pauline idea of sexuality, "the flesh," as corrupting, and they view personal love and sexual attraction even in marriage as distractions from the holy life. Wesley, for example, preferred unmarried converts to remain single and celibate, though later conceding that one might be "as holy" in a married as in a single state (Abelove 49-52).[42] Both leaders regard sex and sexual desire outside marriage as "filthiness of the flesh and spirit" (Wesley, referencing Paul) or belonging to "the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and the pride of life" that must be subdued to live by Jesus's example (Whitefield, "The Good Shepherd," *Eighteen Sermons* 356, paraphrasing 1 John 2:16).[43] Both reject masturbation—"Satan will not cast out Satan," said Wesley—and avoid mentioning homosexuality.[44] Both deplore such pastimes as card-playing and dicing; attending plays and other entertainments; patronizing taverns and alehouses; and reading novels and romances. "Your friends and carnal acquaintances," Whitefield warns, "and, above all, your grand adversary the devil, will be persuading you … to see

41. Those involving issues already touched on include, first, Blake's view of forgiveness as human centered and covenantal, as contrasted to Whitefield's and Wesley's views of effectual or prevenient grace as a sovereign divine act. Blake's attack on election, additionally, differs from both evangelical leaders' endorsements of such a status, whether preselected or based on freely chosen grace and sanctification.

42. Wesley's urging of celibacy was generally ignored; his "as holy" formula was a fallback position (Abelove 58-66).

43. Whitefield uses the phrase as a recurring motif—see also *Works* 5: 36, 6: 282; *The True Nature* 9.

44. Whitefield's "Short Account" of his life mentions a youthful "abominable secret sin" (42) that, Thomas S. Kidd concludes, "we can be virtually certain" was masturbation. Whitefield began but did not complete a condensation of the tract *Onania: Or, The Heinous Sin of Self-Pollution* (Kidd 17-18). Wesley adapted and published a similar pamphlet by Samuel-Auguste Tissot (*Thoughts on the Sin of Onan*, 1767). For Wesley's "Satan" dictum, see Abelove 53. For Whitefield's silence on homosexuality, see his version of Paul's list of types of offenders in 1 Cor. 6:9-20, which omits the "effeminate" and "abusers of themselves with mankind" (*Works* 6: 285; similar lists in *Works* 6: 7, 298-99).



4. William Blake. *Jerusalem* copy E (printed c. 1821), plate numbered 100. 14.8 x 22.4 cm. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection. B1992.8.1(100). Image courtesy of the *William Blake Archive*.

plays, play at cards, go to balls, and masquerades, and to make you the more willing … he calls sinful pleasures, innocent diversions" ("Christ the Only Preservative against a Reprobate Spirit," *Works* 6: 296). Wesley, somewhat more latitudinarian, rejects these activities, leaves those who practice them to "stand or fall" in God's judgment, and recommends instead edifying reading, charitable works, and, above all, prayer (*John Wesley's Sermons* 518-19).[45]

39 Blake, we know, thinks differently on all, or almost all, issues of sexuality and quotidian life, in early and late work.[46]

So, in *Jerusalem*, "gardens" and "palaces" are found within "holy Generation," literally sexual reproduction and the female genitals (7.65-69, E 150), as, in "A Little Girl Lost," the lovers meet "in garden bright" amid "holy light" (lines 12-13, E 29). So, too, in "The Little Vagabond," "Ale-house" and "Barrel" are preferred to "Church" and "quarrel" (lines 2, 11, 15, E 26), as, in *Jerusalem*, the "sinful delights / Of age and youth and boy and girl"—almost a riposte to Whitefield's words above—are tacitly favored over the dominance of "the Perfect" (18.16-17, 26, E 163).

40 Several of these points involve real paradoxes. The first concerns Blake's sense of sin. While counterposing a belief in sexual and bodily holiness to Pauline ideas of bodily corruption and sexual sin, Blake's authorial pronouncements and narrative episodes repeatedly stress that sin is a basic feature of both our world and his imagined new existence. Further, the parts of life that he apparently sees as holy—sexual activity, the body in general, and everyday diversions (*Jerusalem* 18)—are indisputably parts of natural ex-

45. For similar Whitefield passages, see *Works* 6: 12, 14, 288. Wesley's discussion is in a 1787 sermon, "The More Excellent Way."

46. The apparent exception, masturbation, may be viewed less negatively in *Milton* than in earlier work (*Visions* 7.3-9, E 50; *Urizen* 10.19-23, E 75). Here, the testicles appear as "two lovely Heavens, / … each in the other sweet reflected!" (*Milton* 19[21].60-20[22].1, E 113). The self-reflexivity of the "Heavens" implies recognition, if not full validation, of autoerotic satisfaction.

istence (as these terms are used in everyday speech), or, at least, customary parts of social existence, even though, in *Jerusalem* 52, he describes our natural state (what we are "born" as) as a "Spectre or Satan" and "altogether an Evil." Blake, we should realize, is dealing in *Milton* and especially *Jerusalem* with apparently contradictory attitudes that all have deep meaning for him: an idea of the holiness of ordinary life and the natural body, and of their condemnation as sinful being itself the foundation for elevating "the Perfect" over common humanity; and, on the other hand, a root belief both in real sin and in mutual forgiveness as our only hope.

41 When we probe further, we see a deeper-level paradox involving Blake's idea of the natural. While the sexual desires he sees as holy and, more broadly, the desire for diversion and enjoyment may be natural in everyday terms, he does not describe them as such. For sexuality, at least, the signature phrases "the human form divine" and "every thing that lives is holy" imply a divine component, which Blake does not define beyond the use of these and similar images. This component, by implication, comes into play when the body is used in mutuality: "life delights in life" (*America* 8.13, E 54) as, also, the "delights" of "age and youth," "house & family," and more are mutual (*Jerusalem* 18.16-18, E 163). In contrast, the body's divinity is violated when it is used in acts of disrespect, exploitation, domination, cruelty, or mutual hate: "every thing that lives is holy" applies to Oothoon's acts and thoughts, not Bromion's (*Visions* 8.10, E 51; 1.16-17, E 46). In late work, particularly *Jerusalem*—in contrast to the already-mentioned presentation in *The Four Zoas* of love and hate as coeval in a state of nature or early society, which makes no distinction of origin between the two—Blake treats sexual and other acts of mutuality as always inflected by the divine ("mutual in love divine," *Jerusalem* 4.7, E 146). Such acts, for him, seem to share in the recognition of community and the acceptance of sinfulness and forgiveness that he sees as parts of the divine. Atomization and division, power, status, exploitation, and devaluation of the body, in contrast, are the marks of the natural as "Spectre or Satan." Yet this is a somewhat strained definition of the natural, especially in view of Blake's previously noted allowance of access to the divine not only through faith, but also through imagination and expanded perception—capabilities we have from birth, so that, for him, the natural body, what we are "born" as, is not in fact "altogether an Evil" (*Jerusalem* 52).

42 If we ask why, nevertheless, Blake omits these capabilities, maintains the latter position, and offers only "the Religion of Jesus" as a counterfactor in *Jerusalem* 52, two reasons seem relevant. The first is to emphasize polemically his identification, despite differences, with the evangelical revival's insistence on Jesus's presence and mercy, as against what he considers natural religion's trust in self. Here, Blake is with all wings of the revival indiscriminately. The second and more basic reason is to define his sense of sin, and here he is with Whitefield, Hervey, and the Calvinists against Wesley. If Blake's distinction between the natural as only selfhood and the mutual as divine both seems and is arbitrary, excluding some of the body's capabilities as he himself defines them, it still lets him maintain both his view of the body and common life and his conviction of the universality of sin, and so insist that the cooperative commonwealth can exist only through conscious love, awareness of our sinfulness, and forgiveness.

43 With these ambiguities noted, Blake's opposition to Christian perfection constitutes an early and significant stand against an ideology that, important in his own day, would become highly influential in the religious and secular thought of the next two centuries. In religious culture, Wesley's perfectionism developed, in the century after his death, into the Holiness movement within Methodism. Holiness theology grew in response to an increasingly worldly mainstream Methodism, and eventually formed independent Holiness churches. These groups, "Wesleyan in their view of sanctification" (Synan 81), adopted a doctrinal statement at an 1885 conference, on the eve of their emergence as independent churches, that, in part, defined conversion ("justification") as requiring "a full renunciation of sinful beliefs and associations," while sanctification included "the entire extinction of the carnal mind, the total eradication of the birth principle of sin," enabling one to manifest "perfect love." A "Gospel plainness" in dress, living arrangements, and business practices was mandated ("Doctrinal Statement").[47] These tenets bear obvious similarities to Wesley's entire sanctification and suspension of sin, as well as to his and Whitefield's strictures against commonplace activities they viewed as sinful. At one time or another, Holiness churches attacked or banned practices as varied as attending theaters and ball games, consuming Coca-Cola or oyster stews, and, for women, practicing "extravagance of dress" or "needless ornamentation" (Synan 47, 58, 64, 81), as well as all types of sex outside marriage.[48]

44 Later, many Holiness leaders and churches gravitated to Pentecostalism, the most influential strand of Christian worship to emerge in the twentieth century, major sections of which shared Wesley's perfectionism. Among both groups, sometimes referred to broadly as "Holiness Christianity," an emphasis on sexual purity and "living holy"

47. Peters's commentary and partial quotation (137-38) alerted me to this source. My thanks to Candace A. Reilly, manager of Special Collections, Drew University Library, for assistance and responses to questions.

48. See Anderson, chapter 1; Peters, chapters 4-5; Synan, chapters 2-7.

continues, with modifications, into the present. "Despite its attention to matters of the spirit," one scholar with personal experience of the movement notes, "Holiness Christianity encourages a meticulous attention to and monitoring of the body" (Powers 788).

45 In the absence of a permanent Calvinist Methodist church body, parallels to Whitefield's rejection of perfectionism can be found in the beliefs and practice of one of the denominations most receptive to his ministry, the Baptist churches. Most present-day Baptist bodies follow the doctrines of increasing but incomplete sanctification and a continuing but conquerable tendency toward sin. One widely shared definition calls sanctification "a progressive work; … begun in regeneration; and … carried on in the hearts of believers by the presence and power of the Holy Spirit … [through] the word of God, self-examination, self-denial, watchfulness, and prayer" (National Baptist Convention, "What We Believe"). Avoidance of perfectionism and an assumption of continuing temptation and even sinful acts are clear in this formula.[49] Opposition to Wesleyan perfectionism, then, also continued, including a stress on the possibility of God's merciful reception despite "backsliding" and imperfection.

46 Secular perfectionisms, as well, have exerted enormous intellectual and emotional drawing power. In the century and a half after Blake's death, Marxism may have been the most potent. In a pertinent example, Leon Trotsky's *Literature and Revolution* (1923–24)—written in the early years of a dictatorship far more horrible than the one it replaced, which Trotsky himself did much to build—envisioned a new world in which "the average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx. And above this ridge new peaks will rise" (256). The cultural appeal of such projections on both mass and elite levels demonstrates, perhaps, the imaginative force of perfectionism in one of its main secular forms. While more exploration of this topic is beyond my scope, we should note that Blake's use of the perfection idea is directed not only against its religious forms but also against the Elect, who "under pretence to benevolence … Subdud All / From the Foundation of the World" (*Milton* 25[27].31-32, E 122).

47 So viewed, Blake's antipathy to Christian perfection is significant for more than the light it sheds on his relation to Methodism. A key lesson of Wesley and Whitefield's schism over perfectionism, as well as of Blake's response to it and the later history briefly sketched here, lies in that idea's lasting imaginative magnetism and in Blake's perception of a need to struggle against it. In this fuller context, his response to the issue appears historically prescient, intellectually powerful in connecting the illusion of perfection to the reality of human oppression and degradation, and deeply insightful in presenting the alternative sin-forgiveness axis as fundamental to the sanctity of ordinary human lives.

49. This wording is shared by the National Baptist Convention, the largest African-American Baptist association, and several other Baptist bodies. An article on the theologically conservative Southern Baptist Theological Seminary website similarly calls sanctification "a lifelong endeavor" that is "not about perfection, but persistence" (Ford).

Works Cited

Abelove, Henry. *The Evangelist of Desire: John Wesley and the Methodists*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1990.

Anderson, Robert Mapes. *Vision of the Disinherited: The Making of American Pentecostalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1979.

Bentley, G. E., Jr. *Blake Books*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.

Blake, William. *The Complete Poetry and Prose of William Blake*. Ed. David V. Erdman. Newly rev. ed. New York: Anchor-Random House, 1988.

Boren, Braxton. "Whitefield's Voice." Hammond and Jones 167-89.

Chilcote, Paul Wesley. "Introduction to Wesley's Treatises on Christian Perfection." Wesley, *Works* 13: 3-25.

Coleridge, Samuel Taylor. "Religious Musings." *Samuel Taylor Coleridge*. Ed. H. J. Jackson. The Oxford Authors. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985. 13-23.

Connolly, Tristanne J. *William Blake and the Body*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002.

Coppedge, Allan. *Shaping the Wesleyan Message: John Wesley in Theological Debate*. Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 2003.

Currie, Robert, Alan Gilbert, and Lee Horsley. *Churches and Churchgoers: Patterns of Church Growth in the British Isles since 1700*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977.

Dallimore, Arnold A. *George Whitefield: The Life and Times of the Great Evangelist of the Eighteenth-Century Revival*. 2 vols. 1970, 1980. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 2014, 2015.

"Doctrinal Statement." *Guide to Holiness* (July 1885): 27-28.

England, Martha Winburn. "Blake and the Hymns of Charles Wesley." *Hymns Unbidden: Donne, Herbert, Blake, Emily Dickinson and the Hymnographers*. By Martha Winburn England and John Sparrow. New York: New York Public Library, 1966. 43-112.

Equiano, Olaudah. *The Interesting Narrative and Other Writings*. Ed. Vincent Carretta. Rev. ed. New York: Penguin, 2003.

Farrell, Michael. *Blake and the Methodists*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014.

Ford, Coleman. "Six Things Every Christian Needs to Know about Sanctification." *Southern Equip*. 27 March 2018. <https://equip.sbts.edu/article/6-things-every-christian-needs-know-sanctification>. Accessed 10 May 2021.

Hammond, Geordan, and David Ceri Jones, eds. *George Whitefield: Life, Context, and Legacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.

Hervey, James. *Theron and Aspasio: Or, a Series of Dialogues and Letters upon the Most Interesting and Important Subjects. To Which Is Added, Aspasio Vindicated, in Eleven Letters from Mr. Hervey to the Rev. John Wesley*. London: Printed for Thomas Tegg and Son, 1837.

Hobson, Christopher Z. *Blake and Homosexuality*. New York: Palgrave, 2000.

———. "Blake, Paul, and Sexual Antinomianism." *Blake* 52.3 (winter 2018–19): 37 pars.

Jesse, Jennifer G. *William Blake's Religious Vision: There's a Methodism in His Madness*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2013.

Johnson, Mary Lynn. "*Milton* and Its Contexts." *The Cambridge Companion to William Blake*. Ed. Morris Eaves. 2003. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007. 231-50.

Kidd, Thomas S. *George Whitefield: America's Spiritual Founding Father*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014.

King, James. *William Cowper: A Biography*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1986.

Mee, Jon. *Romanticism, Enthusiasm, and Regulation: Poetics and the Policing of Culture in the Romantic Period*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003.

National Baptist Convention, USA. "What We Believe." <https://www.nationalbaptist.com/about-nbc/what-we-believe>. Accessed 10 May 2021.

Newport, Kenneth G. C. "George Bell, Prophet and Enthusiast." *Methodist History* 35.2 (1997): 95-105.

Noll, Mark A. *The Rise of Evangelicalism: The Age of Edwards, Whitefield and the Wesleys*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2003.

Olson, Mark K. "Whitefield's Conversion and Early Theological Formation." Hammond and Jones 29-45.

Paley, Morton D. *Apocalypse and Millennium in English Romantic Poetry*. 1999. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2003.

———. *The Continuing City: William Blake's "Jerusalem."* Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983.

———. "Cowper as Blake's Spectre." *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 1.3 (spring 1968): 236-52.

Pestana, Carla Gardina. "Whitefield and Empire." Hammond and Jones 82-97.

Peters, John L. *Christian Perfection and American Methodism*. 1956. Salem, OH: Schmul Publishing, 1995.

Pinson, J. Matthew, ed. *Four Views on Eternal Security*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002.

Powers, Peter Kerry. "The Treacherous Body: Isolation, Confession, and Community in James Baldwin." *American Literature* 77.4 (2005): 787-813.

Rack, Henry D. *Reasonable Enthusiast: John Wesley and the Rise of Methodism*. 3rd ed. London: Epworth, 2002.

Rose, Edward J. "Blake and the Double: The Spectre as Doppelgänger." *Colby Library Quarterly* 13.2 (June 1977): 127-39.

Rosso, G. A. *The Religion of Empire: Political Theology in Blake's Prophetic Symbolism*. Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 2016.

Stark, David. "Beyond Perfection: A Redemptive Reading of Retracted Holiness Testimony in John Walsh's Letter to Charles Wesley, 15 August 1762." *Wesley and Methodist Studies* 5 (2013): 123-51.

Synan, Vinson. *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997.

Trotsky, Leon. *Literature and Revolution*. 1923–24. Trans. Rose Strunsky. Translation originally published 1925. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1977.

Wesley, John. *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology*. Ed. Albert C. Outler and Richard P. Heitzenrater. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1991.

———. *A Plain Account of Christian Perfection* (1766). Wesley, *Works* 13: 132-91.

———. *The Works of John Wesley*. Vol. 13: Doctrinal and Controversial Treatises II. Ed. Paul Wesley Chilcote and Kenneth J. Collins. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013.

[Wesley, John, and Charles Wesley]. *Hymns for the National Fast, Feb. 8, 1782*. London: J. Paramore, [1782].

Whitefield, George. *Eighteen Sermons Preached by the Late Rev. George Whitefield.* Taken in shorthand and transcribed by Joseph Gurney. Revised by Andrew Gifford. Newburyport, MA: Edmund M. Blunt, 1797.

———. "A Letter to the Reverend Mr. John Wesley in Answer to His Sermon, Entitled, *Free Grace*" (1740). *Works* 4: 55-73.

———. *The Method of Grace. A Sermon, Preached on Sabbath Morning, September 13th, 1741. In the High-Church-Yard of Glasgow*. Glasgow, 1741.

———. "A Short Account of God's Dealings with George Whitefield … from the Time of His Infancy to the Time of His Entry into Holy Orders, 1714–1736" (1740). *George Whitefield's Journals*. Edinburgh: Banner of Truth Trust, 1992. 35-72.

———. *The True Nature of Beholding the Lamb of God, and Peter's Denial of His Lord, Opened and Explained, in Two Sermons*. London, 1753.

———. *The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A*. 6 vols. London and Edinburgh, 1771–72.