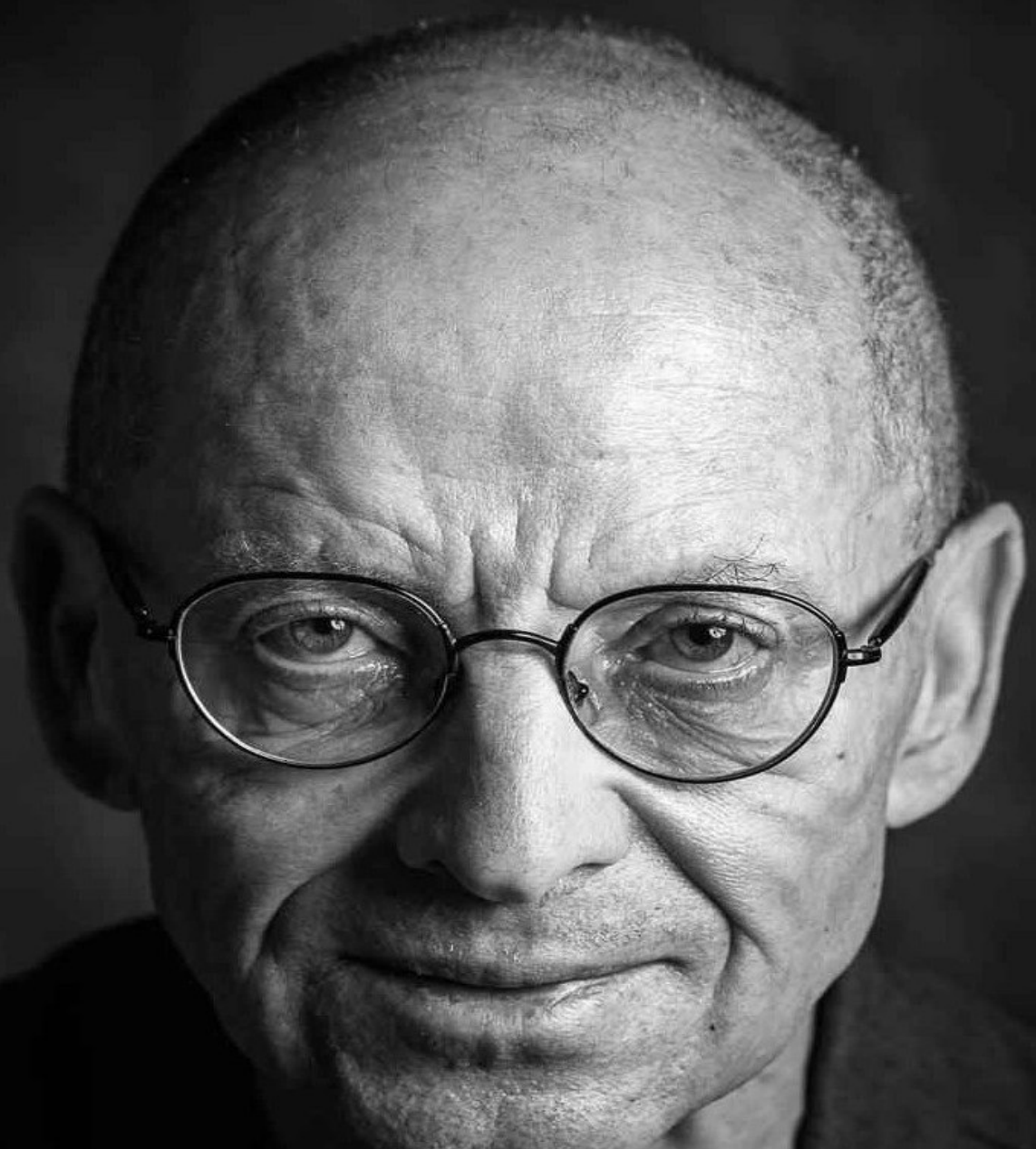


GIORGIO CATTANEO
interviews



MAURO BIGLINO

The Truth about the most famous book in history

THE NAKED BIBLE

Tutthi

The Naked Bible
The Truth about the most famous
book in history

by Mauro Biglino and Giorgio Cattaneo

Copyright © 2021 Tuthi Srl, Torino

Viale XXV aprile, 62 – 10133 Torino
customerservice@tuthi.eu

Translation: Nathaniel De Saint - Clair
Layout: Graffio (Borgone Susa, TO)
Cover: Stefano Fusaro

Index

[In The Name of Mikael, The Commander-in-Chief](#)

[Apocalypse: The Misunderstandings of Revelation](#)

[The Great Reset of Truth](#)

[Controlling the Past to Mortgage the Future](#)

[The Beginnings: It All Started with the Translation of Genesis](#)

[Bereshit: In the Beginning](#)

[Eve, the “Snake” and the Imaginary Apple](#)

[Exterminate them all, even newborns: Word of Yahweh](#)

[“Divine” Butchery and Fake News: The Non-existent Red Sea of Exodus](#)

[The Glory of God and Other Flying Machines](#)

[The Great Scam: A long Tradition of Nonsense](#)

[The Invention of the Biblical God and of His Antagonist, the Satan](#)

[Those Strange, Scary Angels](#)

[Children of the Stars: The Making of Homo Sapiens](#)

[Too Quick to Call It the Bible: The Uncertain History of Those Books](#)

[When the Torah Ended Up in Christians Hands](#)

[The Jesus of Religion and the One Who Wanted to Redeem the Jews](#)

[Theologians and UFOs: The Alien Next Door](#)

[A Curious Wisdom, with No Messiah in Sight](#)

[From the Hundred Early Christianities to the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception](#)

[The True Face of Jesus: an Anti-Roman Rebel Leader](#)

[Why Would Genesis Be Lying about Methuselah’s Age?](#)

[Enoch and the Others, Strolling Around in Space](#)

[All Those Undead, Whisked Away by the Elohim](#)

[Res Inexplicatae Volantes](#)

[Yahweh and His Palestinian and Mesopotamian “Colleagues”](#)

[The Sincerity of the Bible, Once It Is Stripped of Myth](#)

[The Mystery of God Does Not Dwell in the Old Testament](#)

[ELOHIM, NOT GOD: A LITTLE GLOSSARY](#)

[The authors](#)

*My acknowledgment and thanks
go to Elisabetta,
for the precious collaboration
provided during the entire drafting of the text.*

In The Name of Mikael, The Commander-in-Chief

And what if we were wrong?

Good question. Wrong about what?

About everything: who we are, where we come from.

Oh, well. What of it? We'll just turn our beliefs upside down, throw them away. We'll change our minds, about almost everything. We'll overturn our view of the world, of humanity, of the human adventure on Earth.

Madness?

Certainly not: it happens. It has happened before, it will happen again.

Sooner or later it *must* happen, because what always wins, it seems, is human nature, our irreducible curiosity.

It always happens, it is just a matter of time. One day someone just comes along and tells you that it is not true that the Sun revolves around the Earth, that exactly the opposite is true. We can imagine the faces of the bystanders.

At which point the discoverer shows them a telescope and invites them to have a look for themselves. The first reaction is always the same: disbelief, harsh denial, mockery. Come on, how is that possible? Let's be serious, no one wants to fool around here, especially not about certain things.

Galileo, after all, can remind us of Ulysses. The adventure of the Homeric hero seems to be speaking directly to us even to this day. Running into unexplored territories requires a willingness to let the known islands slip out of sight, to let go of conventionally acquired knowledge.

And speaking of Homer: if, for the sake of argument, your name is Heinrich Schliemann and, perchance, one day you find yourself in love with the Iliad, what could you possibly guess from that?

The road is certainly all uphill from there. If you believe that simple literary pages, however venerated as masterpieces, could unveil chapters of real history, the path ahead of you will be impenetrable.

They will call you crazy, naive, a visionary.

You also have a serious handicap right from the start. You don't belong to the stellar caste of the scholars, the self-appointed exclusive cénacle of the

official holders of knowledge.

That mocking smile, however, might suddenly be wiped off their faces, once you stumble upon the actual ruins of Troy. Through clenched teeth, will the skeptical at that point admit the impossible?

Will they concur with you that the ancient text told the exact truth, that it contained precise and geographically detailed information?

Astonishing, to be sure.

Or perhaps just obvious. At least according to your judgment, your logic.

Why on earth, you wondered, should the Ancients have resorted to complicated trickery? Why take refuge in obscure symbolism, accessible only to the very few, to hide and veil God only knows what mysteries? At the time, those able to read and write were but a tiny minority. What would have been the point of playing hide-and-seek with words?

Wouldn't it be more appropriate to take those famous writings literally? And why are the insiders, all of them, so obstinate in their discarding *a priori* the idea that an ancient text might simply say what the author intended to write, neither more nor less, without any great feats of imagination needed to interpret it?

The whole matter becomes even more complicated if the object of our research is not a poem about the Trojan War, but the most famous book of all time, the Big One. By far the most popular text in the world. More than Mao's *Thoughts*, *Harry Potter* and *The Lord of the Rings*.

But how many have read the whole thing?

It is a strange book as well, a collection with variable geometry. You will find a different version in every country you visit. For some, certain books that compose it are valid, while for others they are not. And yet the title of this collection does not change, it is always the same. What changes, even quite a lot, is its content.

Who wrote all those codices? And in what language?

This is unknown; the only certainties are negative ones. We only do know that the version available today and present in practically all households is not the original one, the very first one. Those pages have been continuously worked and reworked, right through the Middle Ages.

Changes, corrections, additions. And subtractions: at least 11 books are missing from the count, even though they are mentioned in other texts of the corpus.

But the real record of that volume is likely to be a different one altogether. It is by no means the most commonly read book, but it is the one most talked about and commented on.

By whom?

By many intermediaries, who often do not know the “native” version, the one penned in the Middle Eastern language of its writers. Had they read it, would they also have discovered that it is not, in fact, the Sun that revolves around our planet?

These are questions that have accompanied the protagonist of this story for years. We are not talking about Ulysses, naturally, nor about Schliemann. He is an Italian, who has just turned seventy and carries his age very well. His "discoveries", however, are something he simply stumbled upon. For work, he turned words from one language to another. And he gradually realized that the classical translations were inaccurate.

Winged angels?

Omniscient and omnipotent deities?

Traces of metaphysical thought? Soul, spirit, immortality?

Not at all.

All absent words, non-existent concepts and imaginative interpretations.

The scholar pointed out these errors and listed them. In the end, they filled a whole box. And when he emptied the box, 14 books came out of it.

It all happened in the space of just ten years. He has become a publishing sensation, a veritable phenomenon.

Hundreds of thousands of copies sold in Italy alone. And then, in just a few months, his brand new YouTube channel reached millions of views.

A strange fate, for a shy, reserved, somber man and a lover of the silences of his mountains. A man from the Piedmont in love with the Alps. Passionate about nature, flowers, mushrooms, birds, insects. And suffering from a strange disease: an insatiable thirst for learning and research.

He was already in love with the ancient languages of Greek and Latin while he was still in high school. Over the years, book after book, without end: sub-atomic physics, the mysteries of the universe, Indian mythologies, archaeology, geophysics, genetics, the conquests of astrophysics, the

illuminating achievements of anthropology.

Only one certainty: an unshakable faith in doubt. The Socratic awareness of those who know perfectly well that they will never know enough: that is the reason for such never-ending studying.

Beware, though: he does not sell truths. He limits himself, so to speak, to suggesting hypotheses. And one above all: what if it were all true, all that is recounted in that famous book?

It's a rather fine mess.

Because if it were so – if what can be read in the original language of that most famous book in history – then the world would never be the same again.

It would be missing one essential element, the most important one: God.

Or rather, his official address.

Doesn't He live there? Is the Divine not to be found in those pages?

“I have never encountered Him, amid those verses I studied.”

The translator has looked for Him everywhere, but He just isn't there. There is no trace of Him.

Are you certain?

“Absolutely.”

But let's be clear here: a premise is needed. Does God exist?

Who knows? The translator is very careful not to talk about it. But neither does he have the unshakable certainties of atheists. He has the utmost respect for believers and keeps himself far from any judgment. What he does know, however, is that the God celebrated by monotheisms does not, unfortunately, dwell at all among those ancient scrolls. He simply never passed by there, not even by accident.

A colossal misunderstanding?

“Let's call it that.”

Does the translator realize the enormity of his assertion?

He certainly does. And that is why we are here to talk about it.

“Let me clarify: I only pronounce myself on what I know. I tell what seems to me to be written, verbatim, in the Bible, that's all.”

That's all, he says.

As if he didn't know that millions of people have literally have revolutionized their way of thinking over the last few years. And they have done so thanks to him, Mauro Biglino.

From his windows in the Susa Valley not far from Turin you can see the

shining peaks that separate Italy from France.

A border region of historical significance: didn't Hannibal descend from those very mountain passes with his legendary elephants?

What we know for certain is that a thousand years later, Charlemagne passed through there to defeat the Lombards. The Battle of the Chiuse echoes in the Adelchi, among the verses of Manzoni. It was the year 773: the Franks bypassed the Lombard defenses by descending from the woods surrounding the Pirchiriano, the rocky spur where the Sacra di San Michele stands.

A millenary, gargantuan abbey. A masterpiece of Romanesque-Gothic architecture. Not only that: it is also the central element of the so-called "Saint Michael's Line", formed by seven large shrines dedicated to Archangel Michael, stretching over the four thousand kilometers that separate Mount Carmel in Israel from the islet of Skellig Michael off the coast of Ireland.

Skellig Michael even made it into the Hollywood saga of Star Wars. The director, Jeffrey Jacob Abrams, chose it as the setting for the final scene of the film *The Force Awakens*. "And we all know full well that science fiction movies are nothing less than anticipations of pre-science, regarding notions that we will all come to know later on."

These are the thoughts that accompany Mauro Biglino very often, every time he leaves the car and puts his boots on to climb along the mule track that leads up to that very same Sacra of San Michele.

A wild area, populated by mountain goats. "The strange thing," he says, "is that the Sacra has become very crowded over the years. I have never seen as many visitors as I do now."

Devout pilgrims, hikers, families.

One can reach it comfortably by car or via the foot paths. Its 500 meters can be mastered even more daringly by the railway set along the face of the rocky cliff that dominates the Sacra.

In the esplanade behind this thousand-year-old abbey, managed with loving care by the Rosminian Fathers, one frequently encounters young free climbers with their colorful harnesses. They enjoy the view while having a sip of something, along with the many cycle-hikers who will make the ascent with their mountain bikes.

An "audience" of common people that would have been unimaginable before the year 1000, when this imposing cult center was built, suspended

over the void, to guard the valley below.

“Tradition tells us that it was Archangel Michael himself who asked for it to be erected. He appeared in flesh and blood in front of Giovanni Vicenzo, the hermit who lived on the opposite side of the valley,

Talking archangels: is this story to be believed?

“Well, for starters, it’s a fascinating one.”

Michael “appears” in seven different places, from the Mediterranean to the North Sea, always asking the same thing: that a devotional center be erected for him.

“Careful, though; he does not simply ‘appear’. If we are to believe the Bible, the angels “made themselves seen”. They arrived, perhaps on foot, and then they left.”

Really?

Of course. Biglino has discussed this quite effectively in numerous books and conferences, quoting biblical passages. There is no trace, ever, of incorporeal beings.

Michael, then, would simply have “made himself seen”. And in a lot of places, too: from the British Isles to Galilee, via France, Italy and Greece.

In Cornwall, says the expert, the grandiose sanctuary of Saint Michael's Mount looks like a twin site of the more famous spectacular Mont-Saint-Michel, where Michael would have been “seen” by Bishop Hubertus, the head of the diocese of Avranches.

“The prelate, though, was not particularly inclined to listen to him. And on that occasion Michael did a rather unpleasant thing, though at least leaving him alive. He pierced his skull with a finger. The bishop then finally decided to build him his sanctuary.”

These places are all very similar to each other, all erected along the Michael Line, all in a dominant position and always with the double presence of both rock and water.

All strategic places as well. “Saint Michael's Mount was strategic for maritime communications off the coast of Cornwall, while Mont-Saint-Michel was decisive in disputes between the Duchies of Normandy and Brittany.”

Monastery-fortresses of military importance. Raised at those specific points at the behest of a strange Archangel, though not exactly an ethereal and impalpable one. It is the very narratives of the time that describe a kind

of warrior, a duly three-dimensional, ultra-corporeal being, and one prepared to give imperious orders.

“Nothing different, one might say, from the physiognomy of the powerful characters whom the Bible calls by the name of Elohim.”

So, the Bible.

What is the effect of trying to reread it with Mauro Biglino?

It is as if our eyes are open, for the first time, finally able to see something that we all have had under our noses forever.

“It is enough to just read the Bible as it is: and that's what we normally don't do. We limit ourselves to letting it be told to us by those who themselves had been told by someone else, without ever having to read it carefully, certainly not in its original language. Incidentally, this has been happening continuously for over two thousand years.”

It is called tradition.

That is to say, notions that have traveled through time, crystallized in very specific forms. It can feel a bit like passing the same box down through the generations without ever opening it.

What does it contain, though? Is it possible that we take many undocumented statements for granted, affirmations that possess a certain air of mystery and fairytales?

But should you open that box, you might discover that those daring interpretations, so evocative, don't actually withstand scrutiny: they just don't make any sense. And that is exactly what our biblical translator found himself. On the other hand, he says, that very same box, handed down for over two millennia, still contains other stories, beautiful and fascinating ones.

What do these stories tell?

First of all, they tell the story of a small group of people and their bond with their Lord, their commander: not a human one, but not divine, either. And then, among those pages, if one wants, one can read, or at least deduce, interesting details about our origin as a species.

Are these reports reliable?

“Nobody can know that. But the story of Genesis is similar to a great many other ‘origin stories’.”

Just to be safe, Biglino declares that he adheres to a precise method. “I simply *pretend* that the Bible tells the truth, and then I verify that this truth is

coherent.”

And is it?

“Very often, yes, it absolutely is. Everything can be explained in the simplest of ways. It’s just a matter of asking the right questions and the Bible will always offer a reasonable answer that makes sense.”

Questions, that is the key.

Children, for instance, are the great specialists this matter. They drive us crazy when they constantly ask us, “Why?”

“So, as an example, have you ever wondered why Archangel Michael is also called St. Michael? Normally, saints are just men like us, that is to say mere mortals, not archangels.”

Could the fabulous Sacra, the spectacular Monte del Purgatorio framed by the Alps, be a special gateway to rereading the Bible alongside Biglino?

In recent months the translator has dedicated a series of in-depth studies to this almost “domestic” Michaelian sanctuary, the one most familiar to him, with special accompanying audiovisual elements.

The Sacra and its Line, of course: a so-called “ley line” – a sort of terrestrial energy field.

Skellig Michael in Cornwall, Mont-Saint-Michel and, to the south of the Sacra, the three Mediterranean sanctuaries: Monte Sant’Angelo, the island of Simi and Monte Carmelo. Monte Sant’Angelo, on the Gargano, is a testament to the cult of Michael in the Puglia region of Italy. “Here, too, Michael would have ‘made himself seen’ by the Bishop, who was initially a bit reticent about the idea of consecrating a Sanctuary to him, one to be created in the natural grotto above the town. Then, following a battle that took place in 492 and won ‘thanks to the intervention of Michael’, he was finally persuaded to set up that important place of worship for him.”

Furthermore, Mauro adds, San Michele al Monte would also have had something to do with the Lombards, just like the Sacra di San Michele in Piedmont.

“The Lombards tended to identify the characteristics of Michael with those of Odin: a soldier and protector of warriors.”

Further south, in the Aegean Sea, there is another large monastery dedicated to Michael. It is situated in the Dodecanese, on Simi island, in the town of Panormitis.

“The cult arrived there from Turkey, from the Colossi area (hence the letters of St. Paul to the Colossians) and it was established after the discovery of an image: an icon representing Michael, dressed in stupendous metal armor. Once again, the Archangel is here represented as a warrior.”

On Simi, the cult of Michael was established in a previous temple dedicated to Apollo, just as the sanctuary of Mont-Saint-Michel itself was erected on a cliff that the Celts had consecrated to their god, Belenus, also identified with Apollo. “It is perhaps no coincidence then that some web sites dedicated to the Saint Michael Line, especially American ones, call it ‘The Apollo-Saint Michael Axis’; that is to say: the Apollo-Michael Line.”

Odin, Apollo and Belenus were all divinities.

So, was this mysterious Mi-ka-el one as well?

His name literally means “He who is like an El”.

Mauro Biglino seems to have accustomed his readers to the practice of the art of analogy, of lateral thinking. Finding transversal connections can at times be indispensable for coming up with scenarios capable of becoming credible hypotheses when no other possibilities exist, precisely for lack of clear references.

“Let’s not forget that the Bible itself is a collection of books without any sources. We don’t know who wrote those codices, which tradition then attributes to this or that author.”

A sensational example? The Book of Isaiah.

“This prophet, the greatest of the Hebrew prophets, is believed to have written only the first part of the book - 39 chapters.”

The second part, added much later, was attributed to an author who, by mere convention, was called Deutero-Isaiah. Almost two centuries later, this “Second Isaiah” would have written the chapters ranging from 40 to 55. But the text (66 chapters) would only be completed by Trito-Isaiah (the “Third Isaiah”) decades later.

“But despite all this, the volume was permitted to continue to be called the ‘Book of Isaiah’, as if it were the work of a single author, always the same one: the greatest of the Old Testament prophets.”

Another very famous prophet, Elijah, is also present in the geography that makes up the Michael Line. He regularly frequented the one situated at its southern end, the promontory of Carmel, a dominant position on the

Mediterranean.

Mauro Biglino emphasizes how important that mountain has been since ancient times: “It is mentioned in Egyptian texts of the fourteenth century BCE, was conquered by the Pharaoh Thutmosis III and later visited by Pythagoras. Ancient writers tell us that when Pythagoras visited Egypt to perform the initiations that would grant him access to particular knowledge, he arranged to be left on the shores of Galilee, then climbed up that very same promontory.

What’s more, archaeologists have found human remains at Carmel: bones that they attributed to the *Homo sapiens* species. “Mind you, these have been dated to over 175,000 years before Christ. This means that if they really do belong to the Sapiens group, they would rewrite what we know today (or rather, what we *think* we know) about the origins of our species.”

The biblical scholar smiles: “For me, this would not be a surprise, considering what the Bible says in terms of what they – the Elohim – did in terms of genetic experimentation to ‘make’ us. I say this, of course, still ‘pretending’ that the Bible is telling the truth.”

Anyone familiar with his work knows exactly what he is referring to, namely the cloning that Genesis, allegedly, talks about to explain the appearance of the Adamites. This was a ‘special’ community of particularly intelligent super-Sapiens able to understand the orders of the Elohim, the Lords of the Gan Eden, later improperly renamed the Garden of Eden.

Yes, you guessed it: we are now entering the territory that Mauro Biglino has been dealing with for many years now. The results may have surprised many readers, but not the many exegetes, especially Jewish ones, who have confirmed his intuitions and the accuracy of his translations.

What we get from all this is a world overturned, but only seemingly so. We quickly come to realize that what is overturned is not the Bible but its theological interpretation, often contrived and completely disconnected from the textuality of the codices.

If we stay true to a literal approach to the text, even the geography of the Saint Michael Line changes.

“The Carmel,” Biglino explains, “is biblically important as well. The name means ‘garden, vineyard’ or even ‘Garden of an El’, in fact. It features the

same root – El – also present in Micha-El’s name.”

That very hill was the almost constant dwelling place of the prophet Elijah. A very notable character: “Elijah was in close contact with the Elohim who, in the end – according to the Bible – ‘took him away’ with them. It also happened to Enoch, the patriarch who went back and forth into space with the Elohim. The same thing happened to Moses, according to an apocryphal text telling us about his ‘assumption’.”

Was Mount Carmel truly this important? Did this Israeli ‘terminus’ of the Apollo-Saint Michael Axis have such a special significance?

This seems to be demonstrated as well by the presence of one of its most famous regular visitors: Elijah.

“Along with Moses, according to the Gospel texts, Elijah himself would have appeared in front of Jesus, when, shortly before being arrested, the Christian Messiah experienced what we know as his ‘transfiguration’.”

The disciples saw him “transfigured”, glowing in the company of two other luminescent personages, Moses and Elijah.

“Technically, two undead, both ‘ascended’ with the Elohim.”

Is everything clear? Not really?

For those not familiar with the world of Mauro Biglino, perhaps some clarification will be necessary.

Who he really is, what he did, what he claims.

What his theses are, what they are based on and how he arrived at those conclusions.

Step by step, Mauro Biglino here provides us with all the explanations and clarifications we need. After 14 analytical monographs on various controversial aspects of biblical exegesis, he feels the need for a summary.

Saint Michael’s Line? It can be collateral, regarding the corpus of the discussion, but only up to a certain point.

“I was on Simi recently and there I was granted the honor of visiting an ancient library, on the nearby island of Patmos, where a text was written, one that today seems to have made a comeback. In the 12th chapter, that text in fact mentions Archangel Michael.”

What text are we talking about?

You guessed it: the Apocalypse of John.

Apocalypse: The Misunderstandings of Revelation

Apocalypse – certainly not the most amusing of words. Generally, it is used improperly to define a catastrophic, end-of-the-world event.

It recently made a comeback, in the fateful 2020, taking everyone by surprise and making most people aware of the importance of a remote Chinese location with an exotic name: Wuhan.

One might say “fear in the form of contagion”.

Shortly thereafter, SARS-CoV-2 would become the new unchallenged *dominus* of the planetary scene, with millions of people locked down in their homes.

An epidemic of uncertain origins. Not that it appeared, at least at the beginning, to be a truly global threat.

At the dawn of the new year, it seemed that the world had something entirely different to worry about. On January 3rd the front pages reported a traumatic event: the killing of a high-ranking official of the Tehran regime in Baghdad, General Qasem Soleimani.

Who was he?

A controversial character to be sure, but one of the highest order and a leading figure in the unstable theater of the Middle East, which for some time now has been bloodied by the ISIS cutthroats.

Gangs of assassins who seemed to have sprung out of nowhere with merciless orders: invade territories, sow terror and kill everyone. In other words, the demand for total submission, of a fanatical kind, under the pretext of exclusive religious affiliation.

Corollary: all Christian churches were to be destroyed, along with all places of worship that were not strictly Islamic, or more specifically, not strictly Sunni.

Incidentally, Biglino ironically points out that ISIS itself could be seen as a

perfect example of an executor of the orders of Yahweh: mass extermination and the destruction of other people's altars. The all too familiar biblical "script".

In those early days of January following Soleimani's strange death, bright flashes lit up the night sky: retaliatory missiles launched by Iran against what were essentially symbolic targets. One of the missiles even shot down a civilian aircraft, and the shock that followed the disaster put an end, in just a few hours, to what had seemed to be the beginning of a nightmarish spiral of events.

Who was this Soleimani? He was certainly hard-core, the leader of Iran's special forces, which had just shown their worth in Syria against the ISIS militiamen.

He had been killed in the middle of the night in the Iraqi capital. It is believed that he was about to engage in important diplomatic negotiations in those ancient Sumerian lands, torn apart by disputes between Shiites and Sunnis amid the great chaos that had broken out in the aftermath of the most recent "American wars".

Those conflicts had been festering against the backdrop of the traditional hostility of the Arab nations towards Israel. They ended with the death sentence of Saddam Hussein, the ferocious dictator who had long been armed by the West and finally accused of possessing weapons of mass destruction which later proved non-existent.

And 2020, fueled once more by the inscrutability of the Middle Eastern puzzle, seemed destined to write yet another page of this infinite war, based on the most classic of scripts. We saw the contention between Arabs and Israelis (note that both are Semites and descendants of Abraham), with the West and Russia on alert. And we let's not forget China, still in the background but getting closer and closer to center-stage, thanks to its exuberant commercial power, which has now spread throughout the great raw materials reserve known as Africa.

And what about the Apocalypse?

The misunderstanding would have been cleared up in a matter of months: the missiles of 2020, the real ones, would not have been of the conventional ballistic type.

We've now begun to call it by its name: the Great Reset, a universal reconfiguration involving political, social, and healthcare systems, but also

economic, financial, psychological and even anthropological in nature.

Mauro Biglino has got his audience accustomed to keeping a safe distance from current events and their possible interpretation.

Wisdom?

“I deal with the Bible. I’m happy to speak about that, but nothing else, because I don’t like to talk publicly about things that I don’t know equally well.”

Historians admit it openly: those who study the past are not necessarily better able to understand the present, let alone predict the future.

For his part, Biglino opens a new frontier of investigation. True knowledge of the past, in its utter concreteness, may prove to be fundamental. It can reveal “precise cultural and financial realities that still affect the masses today.” Not surprisingly, he adds, “systems of power tend to exercise tight control over our knowledge about the past.”

It’s curious: a historian is willing to change his or her mind if documents emerge that contradict some previously established historiographical notions. Those who transform the Bible into a text upon which to base their faith, however, consider it infallible.

Fine, but have they read it?

Have they carefully examined what it says?

“Simply put, the Bible in many respects is just a photocopy of the Sumerian-Akkadian “Origin Stories” classics: the Atrahasis, Enuma Elish and the Epic of Gilgamesh. The birth of our species, the Great Flood and others stories were already all contained in those texts, which the biblical writers would certainly have read. The absurd thing is that, while the Bible (i.e., the copy) is claimed to be an expression of a sort of historical truth inspired by God, the Sumerian texts (the original) are thought to be nothing more than fables, just myths and legends.”

But the real surprise is something else altogether. If we clear the field for just a moment, setting aside the theological reading of the Old Testament – the one of the one God, almighty creator of heaven and earth – is it possible that the Bible does in fact recount historical truth?

“It’s certainly a relevant question. I at least *pretend* that it might be so, for one fundamental reason. The biblical account, as I said, is coherent. Of course it often appears to us as sour, shocking and difficult to digest at times,

but it is a perfectly logical and credible account. We are talking essentially about a war story, describing terrifying confrontations. Fratricidal wars, conflicts among relatives. Yahweh regularly commands the people belonging to him – the sons of Jacob/Israel – to exterminate their adversaries. They all share the same blood, they are neighbors, direct descendants of Abraham or in any case of his family of origin. In a word, they are cousins. And Yahweh’s provisions are cruel: take no prisoners, kill everyone. Neither more nor less than ISIS did.”

The terrorists of the so-called Islamic State?

“I know, the comparison can be off-putting. But that is exactly what is written in the Bible. And with an infinite, staggeringly detailed abundance of elements that are horrific, unacceptable and abominable to us. For example, spare no one, neither the elderly nor the women. Sometimes with one exception: little girls. It was enough for them to be three years old (to be precise, three years and a day) to be considered sexually attractive.”

Horrifying.

One might say that it is a simple question of customs. There is nothing more unstable, after all, than ethics. The moral compass can change in radical ways across the ages. Might it not simply have been considered “normal” in those days to have sexual relations with toddlers?

Mauro Biglino sighs. The subject is so controversial that he felt he had to dedicate an entire chapter to it in his book, *The False Testament*.

“Those are pages are so unsettling that they are never read publicly. But they are not the only ones. The entire textual, literal reading of the Old Testament reveals a completely different story from what we have always been told in the religious context. And yet that is precisely what that book says. What is written in it. I certainly did not discover it. I want to reiterate that: I haven’t ‘discovered’ anything at all.”

Biglino’s “apocalypse” is a strange certainly a strange one. From the Greek *apokálypsis*: revelation.

The translator shakes his head. And smiles. As if to say, *come on, let’s be serious here. Which revelation are we talking about?*

This truth, which he brought to light for the benefit of the general public, has never been either secret or mysterious.

“I’ll say it again: it is enough just to read the Bible to understand what it

actually says. Of course Hebrew keeps us from being misled by improper translations. But reading it in English or any other contemporary language still permits us to have a very precise idea of the events narrated in the Old Testament.”

Authentic stories?

“Again, we don’t know. In some cases, there are confirmations from chronological comparisons that can be cross-referenced with historical sources. More often than not, though, we can only rely on the biblical authors, who unfortunately are still unknown to us.”

What happens if we “pretend” that what is written in the Bible is the literal truth?

“Simple. You realize that this set of books recounts something very precise: the appearance of superior, non-human beings who genetically ‘manufactured’ Homo sapiens. And that there were many of them, and they were technologically advanced.”

Extra-terrestrials?

“Impossible to say. The Bible does not specify that. At most, we can define them as ‘aliens’, but in the more strictly technical sense of the word: namely, individuals who are different and distinct from us.”

At one point, the discussion focuses on just one of them: Yahweh.

“Exactly. The biblical texts describe him with these words: male and warrior. And what does he care about? Not the whole of humanity, but only about his people. And these people are not even the Jews as a whole, but merely a part of them, as mentioned before: the descendants of Jacob-Israel. It is to them that this Yahweh warrior character makes a solemn promise: he would give them a vast dominion which would extend from the Nile to the Euphrates Valley, and even beyond. The map of Greater Israel, sometimes displayed with some satisfaction by the Tel Aviv military even in recent times, including not only the whole of Palestine and all of Jordan, but also a large part of Syria, the southern tip of Turkey and a slice of Saudi Arabia. The so-called “Eretz Israel” also includes a large portion of Iraq, plus the Sinai and the eastern belt of Egypt, between the Nile valley and the Red Sea.

A few thousand years have passed since then. Assuming that Yahweh really existed and that he led the Israelites in his continuous little wars of conquest: do you think he has managed to keep his promise?”

Sinai, Golan, the West Bank. These are the only incursions since 1948.

The twentieth century is a tormented one, probably reaching its peak on that one occasion when hope for a great reconciliation on the banks of the Jordan seemed to be at hand. In 1993, Israelis and Palestinians decided for the first time on mutual recognition, and each party admitted the other's right to exist. The Israeli hero and protagonist of that historical agreement, Yitzhak Rabin, was later awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. Shortly thereafter, he was assassinated by an Israeli extremist settler.

What is striking to us, beyond the biblical promises regarding the coveted Greater Israel, is the firm determination of the small Jewish state that arose after the Second World War, in the wake of universal horror over the Shoah.

It is a fact: only after Auschwitz were the Jews granted the historical right to a State. This could also lead to some disturbing questions, especially considering some recent historical research investigating the loans that Hitler himself would have received from certain discreet overseas bankers.

“If I were Jewish, I would first of all concern myself with understanding why, already at the end of the nineteenth century and into the early twentieth century, the great Anglo-Saxon newspapers repeatedly wrote that ‘six million Jews’ were about to be killed in Europe. At that time Hitler was still going to kindergarten.”

Mauro Biglino is well aware that he is treading on tricky terrain here.

“Let me be very, very clear on this point: I am not remotely questioning the facts of what happened and the appalling extermination perpetrated in the Nazi concentration camps. What I am asking myself, if anything, is how that obsessive ‘prophecy’ came to be in the press. The prophecy about such a precise number of future victims.”

Six million.

Even The New York Times talked about it, on November 6th, 1900:

“Jewish sources write that, in Leviticus, the word that means ‘you shall return’ is missing a letter: ‘vav’, which has a numerical value of 6. The absence of this letter would therefore mean that 6 million Jews would not be able to return to Israel.”

Mauro Biglino does not believe at all in biblical prophecies.

“In the Old Testament, the prophecies are all made ex post facto, without exception: the ‘prophesied’ events, in reality, had already occurred.”

In this case, the gematria – the ancient discipline that assigns a precise

numerical value to each Hebrew letter – also stood in support of the prophecy regarding the most extensive massacre of the twentieth century. Some argue, in fact, that based on this count, the Bible even contains the exact date of the return to Israel – 1948 – and this only after the death of those unfortunate 6 million Jews.

According to the same sources, this is also mentioned in the “Sefer ha Zohar”, the Book of Zohar, also known as the Book of Splendor.

This is a Cabalistic volume from medieval times, composed in Spain by Sephardic Jews.

Although it only appeared towards the end of the 12th century, it was written “in a contrived literary Aramaic,” notes Wikipedia. Did the authors want it to seem like a text dating back several centuries?

The Zohar is still very much a topic of discussion. For some, it is utter nonsense; for others, it contains ancient wisdom.

Incidentally, Mauro Biglino has an excellent relationship with the Jewish community. The recently deceased great Kabbalist Rabbi Arie Ben Nun even wanted to help popularize his books in the United States.

According to Arie Ben Nun, “Life was packaged like a preserve and brought to Earth.” From where? “From another galaxy, from a planet illuminated by a bright, cold star.”

Is this what this most learned Rabbi really thought?

“Of course, and that’s no surprise.”

Biglino finds himself quite at home in the Jewish cultural milieu.

“It’s a world of extraordinary openness. In Judaism, there is room for everyone. It runs from absolute orthodoxy to pure atheism. In rabbinic schools, people are taught not to trust any single source. Once a second one is found, you are encouraged to find a third, precisely to encourage doubt and refutation.”

It is no coincidence that Biglino often cites the Talmud, where this technique is widely applied. In other words, never take anything for granted.

“This is exactly the opposite of what has always been done with the Bible in the Christian tradition. Dogma intervenes, preventing the development of deeper knowledge and understanding. Dogma, or a category of mystery, simply does not exist in the Bible. This is how it works: something gets translated incorrectly, making it necessary to introduce the idea of mystery. It reflects attempts to help the whole story hang together properly, after having

presented the Bible as saying things that, in fact, it had never said.”

Is that the big issue?

“Clearly. The theological interpretation of that book, which is based on traditions that are erroneous or even completely fabricated, serves as the foundation for all the world’s great monotheistic religions, which in turn form the basis of the power structures that still govern the world today.”

Does this apply to everything?

“Consider those 6 million victims of the Shoah. If I were Jewish, those predictions in the newspapers would keep me awake at night.”

Are these elusive powers? Conjectures, conspiracies and secret plans?

Mauro Biglino essentially focuses on the role – in his opinion an improper one – that has been attributed to the Bible as a source of power.

His patient work exemplifies the fact that everything can be re-read in another way, textually, without any theoretical ruminations.

“Let me emphasize that the Old Testament is a beautiful book, as long as it is read honestly, as it was actually written.”

Literal analysis is not the only option to a theological reading. There are many other possible readings: symbolical, esoteric, gematric and Kabbalistic.

“All of them are legitimate, all of them are interesting, provided that we do not to presume to exclude the textual, literal reading, which is precisely what they do not want me to do.”

Is it that upsetting

“Naturally. Because it dismantles from the outset the very idea that God – assuming He exists – has anything at all to do with that book”.

Over ten years of intense intellectual battles, Mauro Biglino has had to defend his work with the utmost commitment.

“I have never claimed to be certain that what the Bible says is true. My ideas are still only hypotheses, albeit very carefully argued and documented ones. The Old Testament may contain truths and inventions, omissions and exaggerations, just like so many other history books. What is unbearable, though, is the way we keep suggesting that when the Bible says one thing, it actually means another.”

The power of persuasion?

“We don’t even know who wrote the Bible. It is not known when it was written, nor in what language. At the time of Moses, Hebrew did not even exist as a language. But we claim to

‘know’ that, when those pages express one concept, in reality they are talking about something else. It might sound crazy, but this is what generally happens. The Bible is continuously made to say what it does not say, what it has never said.”

The point is, the Book has been “used”. It has been used to form the foundation of extremely earthly and material interests.

A curious destiny: theology “spiritualizes” a text that has nothing spiritual about it, and then uses it improperly as a formidable instrument of domination.

Is that the case?

It certainly is, confirms the translator.

“And it has worked very well, in this sense, for over two thousand years. But now seems that fragments of truth are gradually emerging.”

Could this be because we are, perhaps, approaching some sort of apocalypse?

“Speaking of that, I think it’s time we dispel some of the beliefs that have generated a certain emphasis on the Apocalypse of John, the closing chapter of the Bible. It is commonly believed, in fact, to be a reference to the ‘end of time’.”

Is that not so?

“I’m afraid not. That book seems essentially directed to the earliest Christian communities. It is a ‘political’ text, with precise instructions on how to beware of the adversary.”

That is to say, of Satan?

“Not at all. The enemy referred to seems to be Lucius Domitius Enobarbus, the emperor Nero.

A bit of background: the text attributed to the John the Evangelist – written in Greek, probably at the end of the first century – has nothing in common with the extremely explicit realism of the Old Testament written in Hebrew. In the New Testament, compiled under the influence of the by then dominant Hellenic literary culture, the blatantly visionary aspects are dominant.

“The Apocalypse seems to be a text written in code for the nascent Christian Churches. The writing is encrypted, containing instructions and recommendations for defending themselves from the persecutions to which these early Churches were subjected, by the Roman emperors in particular.”

That, for example, is what the infamous 666 refers to, the so-called “number of the beast”.

The text describes it as a strange animal: “It had two horns, similar to those of a lamb, but spoke like a dragon.” It is a beast that “works great wonders” and thus “seduces the inhabitants of the earth.” And then “it ensures that everyone, young and old, rich and poor, freemen and slaves, shall receive a mark on the right hand or the forehead and that no one will be able to buy or sell anything without such a mark – the name of the beast or the number of his name.”

Herein lies the wisdom, the text goes on, allusively: “Whoever has intelligence must calculate the number of the beast: it is, in fact, a number of man and his number is six hundred and sixty-six.”

Nero, then? Is Roman imperialism – both military and mercantile – the real target of this deliberately obscure writing?

“On Latin coins,” Biglino explains, “the name Nero (of which 666 is the numerical transcription) is simply indicated as Nero.”

This number, however, presents some interesting features. “In papyri other than the one used for the preparation of the version of the Apocalypse that was officially included as Canon, there are different numbers. In papyrus number 115, by Ossirincus – and elsewhere as well – the number 616 is found, and in yet other papyri it is the number 665.”

And that’s not all.

“Irenaeus of Lyons, who defined the Canon of the New Testament, believed that this was an error of the copyists. In fact, though, the number might be derived from a Latin re-reading of the number 666.”

While the expression “Nero” appears on Roman coins written in Latin, things change for the coins with the wording in Greek: there the emperor becomes “Neron”.

“That final N has a value of 50, the precise difference between 616 and 666, which would indicate that the ‘number of the beast’ most likely does indeed refer to Nero.”

But let’s not be hasty. There is a second possible interpretation. “The number 616 could be the numerical transcription of the name Caligula, who was emperor before Nero.”

Whatever the case, Nero or Caligula, the general sense would not change.

“In both instances, that number seems to refer to Roman emperors,

considered to be the true enemies of Early Christianity.”

So no ‘end of times’ then?

Not at all.

“The Apocalypse of John seems to me to contain the messianic hopes of those times, when there was a sense of the imminent advent and establishment of the New Kingdom, where the righteous would be saved.”

Almost two thousand years have passed. At the time, though, the new age was expected immediately, from one day to the next.

Re-read in such a way, the words of chapter 7 of the Revelation have another effect altogether.

“... a great multitude ... stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands.”

The righteous, dressed in white, “cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.”

Who are they, these righteous? Where do they come from?

One of the elders replies to the writer of the text: “These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.”

These things are certain: “They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.”

In other words: their redemption draweth nigh.

“The readers of the Apocalypse were probably clamoring impatiently,” says Biglino. “That text was written specifically for them.”

The promise was that injustice would be erased from the world, and that this would be done immediately.

“Those messianic expectations were already expressed by Jesus, who presented them as imminent, indeed as already begun, like the establishment of the New Kingdom. Luke, in chapter 17, has him say, “The kingdom of God is among you.” The coming of the New Kingdom would be established in that same generation.”

This is not how things went.

Typical, after all: the same thing happened with the promise of Greater

Israel.

The Great Reset of Truth

Which is the conspiracy theorist? The one who sees secret plots everywhere or the one actually hatching them? What should we say then about the great Machiavelli, who recommends that the “Prince” know how to be a lion but also a fox, capable of complicated machinations, of concealing his real intentions if necessary and outsmarting his opponents.

Nowadays, especially in that vast ocean that is the web, there is no shortage of people who tend to see all great events of history as always originating from obscure conspiracies.

This is why it is easy for those in control of the official narrative to dismiss as a “conspiracy theorist” even those who are seriously investigating murky matters, ones that are certainly not incontrovertibly explained by the official version provided.

We might mention sensational cases that are still quite recent, like 9/11 or the “vial of anthrax” that was waved at the UN by Colin Powell to evoke Saddam’s famous WMDs.

But do professional historians recognize the existence of conspiracies? Of course they do. And they do so based on precise documents, long protected by confidentiality and later declassified.

Just to stay in the second half of the 20th century, the “declassification” of the famous incident of the Gulf of Tonkin – the supposed *casus belli* of the Vietnam War – is relatively recent. Decades later, the American superpower itself admitted that no North Vietnamese vessel had ever fired on the USS Maddox, whose Commander in 1964 had claimed to be the victim of an attack.

Just a year earlier, President John Fitzgerald Kennedy had been killed, right under the nose of the planet’s most sophisticated security and intelligence apparatus. For decades, the official version offered only one hypothesis: the sole action of an unbalanced killer, Lee Harvey Oswald. Over the years, tons of books and famous films have explored possible alternative truths on that case. Are those conspiracies?

Only in 2007, while on his deathbed, did Howard Hunt – the “number two” of the CIA in 1963 – clear his conscience. He made his confession to his son,

on tape: Kennedy, Hunt revealed, had been killed on the order of what is now often referred to as the “Deep State”. Working together, both the FBI and the CIA had availed themselves of a Chicago mob killer. One of them, James Files, admitted to having fired the fatal blow.

A rather unexpected person recently spoke – in his own way, and somewhat sensationally – about the Kennedy assassination: Bob Dylan. The music legend and winner of the Nobel Prize for Literature in 2016 dedicated an epic and monumental piece to the Dallas assassination. “Murder Most Foul”, in an encrypted yet easily decipherable way, brings the true architects of the plot into focus.

An interesting detail: the timing of the release of the song was surprising, offered worldwide for free on the web, during the days of the global explosion of the pandemic. Kennedy and the Coronavirus?

“Take cover,” wrote Dylan on his website in presenting his news song, as if to suggest a disconcerting correlation between the possible “directors” of the health emergency and the heirs of the Dark Forces who decided to assassinate the president of the New Frontier in 1963.

He was clearly a frightening man, considering his intention of changing the planet from top to bottom, challenging fundamental political, economic and financial assumptions. His supreme objective: promote human rights around the world.

In a word: justice. And the end of an endless stream of abuses.

Historians rightly keep themselves at a distance from any risk of “canonization” by pointing out the shadowy side of the Kennedy administration, from the Bay of Pigs incident (the failed invasion of Cuba intended to overthrow Fidel Castro) to the Pan-American Conference of Punta del Este, which seemed like a concession to the traditional imperialist “Yankee” colonialism by American multinational corporations exploiting their South American back yard. Were these inevitable attempts at rebalancing power, to then truly work to effect a positive “paradigm shift” for humanity, as the secret correspondence with Nikita Khrushchev would later confirm, including the mirage of ending the arms race and the nuclear nightmare of the Cold War with the USSR?

Many voices are emerging about this historical juncture, with the explicit intention of presenting apparently decisive writings concerning a potential

“hidden” history.

One of the most famous of these voices is that of Scotland’s Graham Hancock, well known to the international public for his celebrated best-sellers.

Starting with the Egyptian pyramids, their true dating and the real function of those monuments, must we now completely rewrite history?

Biglino recently quoted Italian writer Paolo Rumor, a lawyer from Vicenza and a member of an important family with strong ties to the Catholic world. His book *The Other Europe*, released in 2010, features the private memories of his father, Giacomo, himself the cousin of the famous Mariano Rumor, several-time Prime Minister of Italy.

And what does Paolo Rumor talk about in this book?

He talks about yet another shameful “behind the scenes” scenario: a certain power structure that has been secretly orchestrating the destinies of the entire world, manipulating historical events through the surreptitious “overseeing” of dynasties, kingdoms and empires, including modern nations and the creation of the current European Union. It goes without saying that this “structure” is in firm control of the media and the flow of information, thereby controlling the official narrative of history.

Paolo Rumor tells us that his father was commissioned to represent none other than the Vatican in the complex treaty negotiations for the reconstruction of post-war Europe, negotiations that were initiated while the Second World War was still underway.

Giacomo Rumor, his son tells us, answered directly to Giovanni Battista Montini. At the time, the future Pope Paul VI was associated with the highly efficient Vatican secret service, a body that to this day many likely do not even know exists.

So this secret service, together with similar European and American entities, would already have been planning the formation of the EU during those terrible years of the Battle of Stalingrad and the D-Day landings.

Another conspiracy?

Mauro Biglino addressed the issue extensively and directly in his video “Le radici del progetto” (The Roots of the Project), published on November 20th, 2020 on his YouTube channel *ilveromaurobiglino*.

“It is especially in a situation like the one we are experiencing now that I believe that knowing the past really helps us understand the present, and

perhaps even allows us to hypothesize possible future developments.”

The author does not hide the risks intrinsic to such an enterprise. “I know very well that talking about certain issues can lead to being categorized as a so-called ‘conspiracy theorist’. But didn’t a “conspiracy theorist” used to be the one who hatched a conspiracy?

Today, as we know, things are different.

“‘Conspiracy theorist’ has come to indicate those who discern plots, those who reveal plots, or, in a derogatory way, those who see plots everywhere.”

This is not the case, the scholar emphasizes. “Just think of Rudolf Steiner. Already at the beginning of the twentieth century, he was talking about hidden elites who, in a covert way, tried to set up and manage plans to control humanity.”

Apparently, though, the new “apocalyptic” atmosphere of the worldwide Covid season is changing, day by day, the type of information that is conveyed to the masses, eventually including the unthinkable.

“There are other people whom I can’t imagine being included in the category of conspiracy theorists, people who have, however, made statements that seem typical of conspiracy theories.”

One name above all: Monsignor Carlo Maria Viganò, the Catholic archbishop and former Apostolic Nuncio to the United States.

In his open letters addressed to then-President Donald Trump in the run-up to the 2020 presidential elections, he explicitly used the term “Great Reset”.

Careful, though: “That expression is not typical of the conspiracist. It has been used by important institutions such as the UN and the World Economic Forum in Davos.”

And Viganò is not alone. Also speaking in those terms is another leading exponent of the Catholic world, Livio Fanzaga, presbyter of the Scolpi Fathers and much-loved director of Radio Maria, the official radio channel of the Roman Catholic Church.

This radio channel, Biglino points out, has a worldwide network managed by 20,000 volunteers and followed by 30 million people, broadcasting in over 70 countries and 50 languages.

Echoing Monsignor Viganò, Biglino recalls, Livio Fanzaga has spoken of a “health coup d’état” and a “mass-media coup d’état.”

The accusation is direct: a shadowy power has at the very least exploited the Coronavirus emergency in the most cynical of ways, making it the ideal

pretext for inflicting humanity with a “new paradigm”: a neo-slavery based on fear and a “totalitarianism” imposed on us by a sort of psycho-health regime.

Is it really that strange then that, now of all times, the Kennedy name is resurfacing?

It is in fact none other than Robert Kennedy, Jr., the son of Bobby Kennedy, who is talking plainly about a conspiracy. In the summer of 2020, the nephew of the president assassinated in Dallas wanted to reiterate these accusations during a speech he gave in Berlin, recalling the historic ‘Berlin Speech’ made by his uncle.

While the Kennedy dynasty has always been associated with politics, the explicit foray onto plainly political ground by ranking figures of the religious world like Viganò and Fanzaga appears much more unusual.

What did Monsignor Viganò actually say in his letter? Incendiary words, for the purpose of making unequivocal accusations.

“We are in times when the fate of the whole world is threatened by a global conspiracy: a global plan called the Great Reset is underway.” According to the high prelate, “This is a plan created by an élite who want to subjugate the whole of humanity, imposing coercive measures to limit the freedoms of individuals and peoples.”

For this “élite”, again according to Viganò, “this crisis serves to render recourse to a Great Reset irreversible, giving the coup de grace to a world whose existence, and all memory of it, they wish to completely erase.”

Viganò also speaks about the “suicide” of our Western culture. He says, “While citizens are denied their fundamental rights, all of this is happening in the name of a health emergency that is increasingly proving to be instrumental to the establishment of an inhuman and faceless tyranny.”

Carlo Maria Viganò is perfectly aware of the extent of his accusations and of the risks run by those who formulate them. On the other hand, he adds, the naked truth is now there for everyone to see. “Until a few months ago, it was easy to demean as conspiracy theorists all those who denounced these terrible plans, plans which we now see unfolding before our very eyes, executed down to the smallest detail.”

In another statement, one filmed on video, Viganò adds that this “plan” is managed by a secret elite and has very ancient roots.

Mauro Biglino also points out that even a prestigious journalist like Aldo Maria Valli, former Vatican historian for RAI (Italy's state-owned television) wrote in his blog about the same concepts expressed by Viganò, emphasizing the origins of this phenomenon, which according to him are centuries old.

One of their final goals? The absolute control of information, of the narrative of events.

“The management of history is fundamental for those who want to govern us,” Biglino stresses, recalling what George Orwell wrote as early as 1948 in his famous novel *1984*, a book that has taken on a new dramatic relevance.

“He who controls the past controls the future, and he who controls the present controls the past,” wrote Orwell, putting these words in the mouth of the official – and nightmarish – propaganda that dominates a fictional world, one that is now frighteningly dystopian.

Prophecies?

Statements of facts: “Those who have power manage the knowledge that we believe we have about our past,” Biglino summarizes, lingering over a decisive element. “For Orwell, the manipulation of the past also has the purpose of safeguarding the infallibility of power, which in his novel is embodied by the single-party Big Brother.”

Infallibility?

Absolutely. “In so doing, they isolate anyone who dares to doubt what is being told about the past, as if he or she were committing a crime of treason.” As if to say: “This is what the past is, beware any who dare to question it.”

“The same thing is true for ancient texts, and it is true for the construction of religions, which are based on a certain dogmatic interpretation of the writings from which they are derived, an interpretation from which one must not deviate.”

Do you think this is a modern approach to the matter?

“Not at all. The seeds of a certain conception of humanity are already very present in the Bible.”

In truth, Biglino continues, this control over information concerning the past has been established for millennia, because those who manage power know all too well that the management of knowledge relating to even the most remote facts is fundamental.

This is confirmed by someone who lived almost two thousand years ago,

Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea, one of the Fathers of the Church.

In his *Praeparatio evangelica*, says Biglino, Eusebio “writes things that help us understand the conditions our culture has lived in for centuries and perhaps even for millennia.”

Simple observations, in fact: “Th situation we are analyzing here today, in the present, actually has very ancient roots and motivations.”

Eusebius quotes the writings of the Greek Philo of Byblos, who lived between the 1st and 2nd centuries CE. Philo had himself studied the texts of Sanchuniaton, a Phoenician priest of the 12th century BCE. “We are therefore talking about some 3200 years ago.”

And what did Sanchuniaton write about? What does he claim to have discovered in his writings? The blatant manipulation of historical reality, the disappearance of facts and their replacement with more convenient truths.

The Phoenician “studied the writings of Taaut, knowing that, of all men who lived under the sun, he was the first one to have invented writing and to have thus written books which laid the foundations of the ‘logos’.”

And who was he, this Taaut?

“He was called Touth by the Egyptians, Toth by the inhabitants of Alexandria, Hermes by the Greeks.”

Eusebius adds, “As far as the Jews are concerned, the most reliable facts are narrated by Sanchuniaton of Beritus,” near present-day Beirut. And the Lebanese Sanchuniaton “had in his hands the memoirs written by Jeròmbalus, priest of the god Yehwò” - who for Biglino is none other than Yahweh, the so-called biblical God.

And here is the point of the matter: Sanchuniaton accuses later writers, who “falsely and arbitrarily interpreted in an allegorical way and, based on physical explanations and theories, distorted the myths and legends concerning the gods.”

The Hellenic historian Philo, quoted by Bishop Eusebius, “thus uses the narrative of the Phoenician priest to discredit the use of allegory.”

The message: don’t trust any interpretations that invoke figurative language.

“Anyone dealing with biblical themes,” says Biglino, “knows very well how much allegories and metaphors are used to interpret the Bible and make it say things that the Bible does not say.”

Mauro Biglino has been saying this for over ten years. “If we read the Old

Testament in a literal way, we discover things that allegory and metaphor have kept hidden from us for centuries.”

Apparently, “this was a technique used even back then and confirmed to us by someone as unlikely as a Father of the Church, Eusebius of Caesarea.”

An explicitly formulated denunciation.

“The most recent writers who have dealt with sacred history have repudiated the facts that occurred in the beginning,” writes Eusebius, quoting Sanchuniaton via Philo. “And after having invented allegories and myths, which they combined in such a way as to connect them back to cosmic phenomena, they have instituted mysteries enveloped in such a dense darkness that it was not possible to easily see what had really happened.”

And this is still being done today, Biglino remarks. It happens every time it is claimed that, in reality, the ancients symbolically interpreted cosmic phenomena.

Here, however, we are going one step further: the “invention” of allegories and myths and the “institution” of mysteries, which in practice, according to the Phoenician, was a smokescreen specially designed to hide the truth.

Philo himself, Eusebius adds, told the story of how Sanchuniaton discovered this great imposture. “Having come across certain secret books, which had hitherto been hidden in the depths of the Temple of Amun, he devoted himself to their study and the understanding of all those things that were not meant for everyone to know.”

For Biglino this is overwhelming proof. “Knowledge of the past must necessarily be reserved for the very few. The masses must be given an interpretation that is useful to power.” It is also worth underscoring the chronology of these literary revelations. Eusebius wrote between the third and fourth centuries CE, and Philo of Byblos between the first and second centuries, while Sanchuniaton is from the twelfth century BCE.

Eventually, Sanchuniaton “got rid of the myths and allegories in which these primitive times and stories had been enveloped.” And the priests who lived after him “wanted to hide the truth once again and return to the myth: thus were the mysteries originated.”

Those priests, Biglino stresses to avoid any misunderstanding, were not like those of today. They did not have to “lead souls towards God. They were the caste that looked after the (material) interests of the so-called gods.”

In the works cited by Eusebius, Philo provides yet a further speculative

declination, on the cultural level, of the colossal manipulation spoken of by Sanchuniaton.

The Greeks, he writes, first appropriated most of the myths created by the ancient priestly caste, then, “after having adorned them in various ways, they transformed them into tragedies and, thinking of seducing men through the charm of fables, they embellished them in every possible way.”

These new accusations end up sweeping away the very foundations of the great Hellenic literary tradition.

“Drawing inspiration from these stories,” writes the historian of Byblos, “Hesiod and the other Greek poets composed their theogonies, gigantomachies, titanomachies and various other tales.”

Disconcerting? Absolutely.

“Our ears, accustomed to these stories since childhood and pummeled by these fantasies for so many centuries, guard the fabulous material transmitted to us by these fables as though it were an archive.”

So: fairy tales, passed off as authentic stories to hide the truth?

This is a real shame, Biglino observes, since the facts as narrated in the original story are more convincing. They are even more fascinating than the allegories with which we tried to cloud them.

“This is not a conspiracy but rather a technique widely used to ‘manage’ the past, control the present and plan for the future.”

A “technique” which Eusebius gives an account of by once again quoting Philo: “Strengthened by time,” those fairy-tale inventions “have become a heritage that is very difficult to get rid of, so much so that the truth seems like a fantasy, while the counterfeit stories seem to have all the characteristics of truth.”

Is this not the perfect description of what we are experiencing today, Biglino wonders?

Controlling the Past to Mortgage the Future

It was a Tuesday, March 10th, 2020. It was Italy's turn to experience the extreme harshness of the lockdown, after China, the first country in the world to do so.

Everything was closed, travel was prohibited, millions of citizens were confined to their homes and forced not to work. The deserted cities were suspended in an immense silence. The reason for this decision: the spreading of the coronavirus epidemic.

In a remarkable video, shot from his home in full "curfew" mode, Mauro Biglino identified some illuminating details, citing scientific sources. In just a few weeks of complete transportation shutdown in the spring of 2020, the earth's atmosphere had cleared significantly.

Despite the worldwide ecological alarm insistently reiterated in recent years, it is as though the Earth only needed a handful of days to get set to rights. According to Indian experts, even the water of the Ganges might have eventually become potable.

Historians recall that, during the so-called Little Ice Age in the 17th century, during winter in Paris they could skate on the frozen Seine, while markets were set up on the iced-over surface of the Thames in London. On the other hand, in the so-called Warm Period of the Middle Ages, between 900 and 1200, the temperature was a mild one even in Iceland, while vines were grown in England.

Is it legitimate to suspect that someone might periodically be secretly manipulating certain events to send out messages intended to profoundly transform society?

Various official sources have also spoken explicitly about the Great Reset. In June 2020 it was Kristalina Georgieva, director of the International Monetary Fund, who considered the global economic paralysis induced by the pandemic emergency to be an extraordinary "opportunity,"

a formidable acceleration towards the "great transformation" based on the digital cloud market and the "green" economy.

Joining the German economist Klaus Schwab, president of the Davos Forum (and the author of the neologism “Great Reset”), are members of the World Bank, influential politicians from the UK and the US and great minds of industry and finance. Their possible goal? To exploit this pandemic crisis, “reset” the economic model and replace it with the so-called “Green New Deal”.

This model would then be ruled by the giants of what Shoshana Zuboff, a Harvard Business School professor, has called “Surveillance Capitalism.” Of strategic importance is the role of the so-called Big Five of technology: Facebook, Google, Amazon, Apple and Microsoft. With the progressive digitalization of our daily lives, these major players of the web “are destined to penetrate with ever greater invasiveness and ability to control the existence of human beings.”

Controlling the multitudes... does this have anything to do with the Bible?

Mauro Biglino’s answer is very clear: this trend is not just a contemporary one. Just look at certain passages of Exodus or Deuteronomy.

The scholar draws such “vertical parallels” step by step. How is it possible that the same pattern can recur, at least in its fundamental assumptions, over thousands of years?

A striking response seems to be contained in Paolo Rumor’s essay, “The Other Europe.” Everything suddenly becomes more understandable if we hypothesize that human events are orchestrated by a hidden hand and guided by a very few people that are capable of somehow passing on their power in what is essentially a dynastic way.

Is this believable?

It is Rumor himself who sheds light on this. The book was written based on the memoirs of his father, Giacomo, who at a certain point in his life was made aware of the existence of a mysterious “entity”, a very small élite, allegedly ruling the planet in an uninterrupted way for thousands of years, with roots as far back as Mesopotamian antiquity.

An expert like Loris Bagnara, who contributed to Rumor’s book, confirms that the toponymy mentioned in the book is perfectly consistent with the historical geography of that area of the Middle East, along the Tigris and Euphrates rivers.

Another expert, the eminent Italian political scientist Giorgio Galli (himself one of the other co-authors of the book) confirms that the powerful

people mentioned by Rumor, even those not in the foreground, actually played a decisive role in the “secret” construction of the future European Union, decades in advance of the events then known to the general public.

So, this begs the question: who was Giacomo Rumor’s source?

The man to reveal to him the existence of this phantom “structure” made of unseen powers was Maurice Schumann, an esoterist and well-known French politician and one of the founders of Gaullism.

According to Schumann, based on what he apparently revealed to Giacomo Rumor, certain operations of global impact had been like child’s play. This is what the self-styled “structure” had always done.

Global oversight: wars, empires and revolutions, technological advances. And control of knowledge: the gradual diffusion of ideologies, beliefs and information.

Something like the “Great Reset”? Just another day at the office, really.

Back to current affairs: the United Nations document called “Agenda 2030” dates back to 2015, and the objectives of this document are of historic significance. According to the interpretation of the well-known American analyst William Engdahl, Agenda 2030 envisions a world “with income equality, gender equality, vaccines for all under the aegis of the WHO and CIEP,” or the Coalition for Innovations on Epidemic Prevention launched in 2017, again by the World Forum in Davos in collaboration with the Gates Foundation.

In an analysis that does not differ much from the one Monsignor Viganò himself would later propose, Engdahl sees yet another elitist dystopia: a substantial erosion of middle-class income, to facilitate a reduction in consumption and carbon emissions.

This is not that much different, however, from what was proposed in distant 1968 by a particularly influential cénacle like the one of the “Rome Club”, founded by the Italian manager Aurelio Peccei. They sounded an alarm that had tremendous resonance: humanity must curb its ambitions and its consumption to mitigate the environmental impact caused by the overpopulation of the planet, and create a world that would forever be free from hunger and lack. In other words, it is precisely the recent prosperity gradually achieved by billions of people around the world that is endangering the ecosystem of the planet.

Now, it would seem, the timeliness of these predictions is explosively shocking.

Given the structure of the new “surveillance capitalism” that is being created, the afore-mentioned “income equality” – again according to William Engdahl – could only translate into depressing equality downwards, with the transfer of income subtracted from the base and diverted to the top of the “pyramid”.

According to the analysts of global banking institution UBS, what we’re heading towards is a post-pandemic world “presenting itself with a concentration of wealth not seen since 1905”, when “the battles for workers’ rights and fair wages were still in their infancy”.

Are we facing an “end of history” scenario? Can one believe economist Peter Koenig, already part of the World Bank and the WHO itself, when he argues that the global pandemic, after all, serves the purposes of the elite pulling the economic and political strings?

Just points of view, of course. Not to mention a famous statement made by Prince Charles, according to whom the shock waves triggered by the pandemic crisis “may well make people more receptive to big visions of change.”

It’s precisely about royal families, Mauro Biglino stresses, that Paolo Rumor’s book – made available to the press in 2010 – talks about.

The book mentions a very peculiar “esoteric tradition,” one that “is tied to the belief that the history of the human species on Earth is much older, and arouses far more controversy, than what is held by official science.”

Re-read today, Rumor’s book leaves us speechless.

“There was, and perhaps still is, at a very high level and unknown to us, a group of people (or an entity) that worked and is still working on an important project,” for Europe and beyond.

According to the author, the members of this secret elite “do not hesitate to resort to techniques of suggestion, or dissimulation, to guide and influence public opinion, its expectations, its mental aspirations and consequently to accept the structural changes involving the national communities they push forward.”

As for individual governments, still according to Rumor, they do not seem to have “the ability to interfere with this aforementioned plan of action.” The same is true for political parties: “In reality, they are completely excluded

from what in jargon is called “the Great Work”, a term borrowed from the hermetic lexicon of alchemical tradition, familiar to initiatory circuits.

And what does this Great Work consist of?

“The project envisages that Europe be governed by a moral leadership, personified by some individuals belonging to branches of ancient nobility that have their roots in the distant past, partly of Jewish extraction.”

Rumor decodes this as “a sort of transversal structure, which acts as a catalyst for certain contingent decisions of economic, social and political nature, in conjunction with certain important historical moments and events.”

And how far back does this “entity” date to?”

“The very dawn of civilization, although this is almost embarrassing to say.”

“Embarrassing” is the right adjective.

“I can only express my amazement,” Rumor confesses, “at the assertion that a more or less significant part of Western history has been and still is skillfully and profoundly influenced by a few ruling minds.”

Rumor and the Big Reset?

Mauro Biglino himself invites us to reflect with an open mind on some of the innovations that are appearing on our horizon in such a very short time.

Take the so-called “universal income”, for example.

“Viganò too mentions the possibility of arriving at a sort of ‘universal salary’, in exchange for the transferring of part of our freedoms.”

Biglino also mentions Angela Merkel’s Germany, where the first project of this sort has begun: 120 people will be given a salary of 1,200 euros a month for three years, provided they don’t do any work. “This experiment is designed to verify the degree of satisfaction that people who are maintained by the state can feel. A sort of guaranteed income, as long as one is ready to give up several freedoms. This is not even altogether novel. “It is an experiment that has already been attempted in Canada, then in Finland and that is now starting in Germany, to specific ends.”

All this, Biglino maintains, suggests a very particular conception of us on the part of these few ruling over the many, a particular conception of humanity “seen as a sort of herd, cattle, an anonymous group, kept in farms whose shapes and sizes can vary according to the objectives of those who govern them. We would therefore be controlled in this way and considered as

animals.”

Zootechnics, it would seem. But how should all this be entangled with the subject of Biglino’s decade-long studies?

That is easily said: “In the Bible, the Elohim who ‘made’ humanity considered us more or less like a particularly evolved animal species (which we are, technically), an animal species that could be used for their needs as it had been rendered capable of understanding and carrying out orders of various degrees of complexity, especially the more the species was perfected by them.”

“Manufactured” humanity?

Biglino is not alone in holding this hypothesis. In 1996, when the embryo from which the sheep Dolly was born was cloned, the rabbis were not at all scandalized.

Genetic cloning? It is already present in the Bible, according to Egeal Safran, professor of medical ethics at the University of Jerusalem. “Just look at how Adam and Eve came to be.”

So, Biblical zootechnics? And what relationship would this have with the hypothetical “great manipulation” going on today, under the guise of the Great Reset?

Biglino: “I am merely interested in detecting the seeds of this conception of humanity, understood as a mass of individuals over which certain minds (who consider themselves elevated, or perhaps they really are) believe they have the right to govern at their pleasure. Honestly speaking, “this also implies a very low consideration of ourselves. It means we are being commodified, we are property, subjects simply capable of producing wealth for them, if properly directed.”

As usual, Biglino prefers to let the Bible speak directly.

Deuteronomy, chapter 15.

Yahweh says to the people he has chosen: “Thou shalt reign over many nations, but they shall not reign over thee.”

Already in this passage, the scholar points out, “the concept of an elite is introduced”, one inserted amongst humanity in a dominant position.

“Like Rumor,” Biglino specifies, “I don’t make any judgements on whether these facts are correct or not. I simply want to tell the story as it is and make its content available to anyone. People will then come to their own conclusions.”

To achieve this management of humanity, the scholar adds, “we humans must be considered as mere commodities: tools to be used.”

What, then, are the seeds of this conception?

“The Bible often mentions censuses. Not being at all omniscient, Yahweh needed to count conduct censuses of his population to verify their numbers. And, above all, Yahweh needed to know how many viable males he could count on to wage his wars of conquest.”

The Book of Exodus is extremely clear in this regard.

The following instructions are found in chapter 30: “When thou takest the sum of the children of Israel after their number, then shall they give every man a ransom for his soul unto the Lord, when thou numberest them; that there be no plague among them, when thou numberest them.”

“The ‘boss’ is saying, ‘The moment I count you, pay me; otherwise I’ll hit you with a plague.’”

Biglino smiles.

“Do you understand what the concept of ownership over individuals is?”

Each had his price.

“Whoever is counted shall pay half a shekel,” which was equal to about 10 grams of silver. “This half shekel will be an offering to Yahweh.”

Compulsory taxation for anyone aged 20 or more, without any distinction of wealth: “The rich shall not give more, nor the poor less.”

Biglino insists on this point. “It’s a hard concept to digest: I will count you amongst my own, and you will pay me, because your life is mine. You can redeem it by paying for it, and I – the alleged spiritual, transcendent, omniscient, omnipotent God – shall enrich myself with your silver.”

Pretty straightforward, isn’t it?

“This allows us to understand how deeply the seeds of the past are still rooted in our present lives and how this can help us, at least hypothetically, to foresee what is to come, what they have in mind for us, possibly, in the near future.”

We mustn’t, then, be scandalized if someone is terrified of some dystopian ending as the result of this looming Great Reset. That’s nothing that hasn’t happened before. Nothing too alien, certainly, to the “proto-zootechnical” conception that can be glimpsed, verbatim, in the Old Testament.

And here we are at last: we have entered, in a rather direct manner, the

realm of biblical exegesis for which Mauro Biglino has become a bestselling author.

In all probability, the very times we live in facilitate a very contemporary re-reading of the Old Testament.

These pages put all firstborns (humans, but those animals considered “impure” as well) are placed on the same level: “They are reserved for Yahweh but can be redeemed with an offering of money.”

In this case, Biglino comments, “we reach a frightening level of the commodification of people.”

In Leviticus we read that “the Lord said to Moses, ‘Speak to the children of Israel, and tell them: if a man wishes to satisfy a pledge, here is the value that you will need to present for each of these people pledged to the Lord.’”

This means that if someone had contracted debts and therefore had offered himself to the Temple, that is to say, the “state property” of the time, if he wanted to redeem himself he would have had to settle the bill according to a very precise tariff.

“The value of a 20 to 60-year-old male will be 50 shekels of silver.”

That was how much the freedom of a physically strong man was worth.

“If it is a woman, the value will be 30 shekels.” And “If it is a person aged 5 to 20, your price will be, for the male, 20 shekels, and, for the female, 10 shekels”.

And what about the children?

“If it is a child from one month to 5 years old, the value of the male will be 5 silver shekels, while that of the female 3 silver shekels.”

The “devaluation” for elderly individuals was also inevitable. But even there, with a clear distinction between men and women: “For a person aged 60 and over, if male, the value will be 15 shekels, if female 10 shekels.”

To summarize: a healthy male, in full physical vigor, is “worth” 50 shekels, and an old one is “worth” just 15.

“If this isn’t commodification, then tell me what it is. This is a specific monetary value given to people who are treated and traded as commodities.”

But then, of course, it will be said that in other parts of the Bible, it seems that Yahweh says other things. “Yes, it would seem so, but,” Biglino specifies, “he always does so concerning his own people, the Israelites, whom he clearly distinguished from the rest of humankind.”

In Deuteronomy, in any case, this is indisputable. And in other books,

again taken from the Old Testament, there is even a specific value attributed to so-called “sacred” goods, meaning those reserved exclusively for Yahweh.

Just think of Leviticus, chapter 5.

“If a soul commit a trespass, and sin through ignorance, in the holy things of the Lord; then he shall bring for his trespass unto the Lord,” it is written, “a ram without blemish out of the flocks, with thy estimation by shekels of silver, after the shekel of the sanctuary, for a trespass offering. And he shall make amends for the harm that he hath done in the holy thing, and shall add the fifth part thereto.”

That is: if you took something, from the goods set aside for Yahweh, you must return the equivalent of the value, plus 20%.

“So ‘sacred things’ are completely commodified, and with the addition of a VAT.”

This precursor of Value Added Tax reappears in chapter 23 of Leviticus.

“Whoever inadvertently has eaten a sacred thing must repay the value of that sacred thing to the priest, plus one fifth of it.”

Once again, the “sacred thing” is immediately assigned a value of an additional 20%.

And this, adds Biglino, is true for everything: even housing!

Book of Leviticus, chapter 27, writes that “when a man consecrates his house to the Lord,” perhaps because he had to pay a debt to the Temple-state property (the taxman), “the priest will evaluate it and, whether its condition is in a good or bad state, the priest’s evaluation must be accepted. If the consecrator wants to redeem his house, add one-fifth of the sum valued, and the house will be his.”

Here once again we see the ubiquitous 20% applied to real estate transactions.

Money is the incontestable value.

Everything has a price. People as well. How much could one individual be worth? 50 shekels of silver, at best: as long as he was male, in full health and at the right age to work and fight.

“All this,” Biglino summarizes, “leads us to understand how a system starts in antiquity (the Bible) and is by theorized about by important political families like Rumor’s.”

And what about those revelations made by Sanchuniaton and taken up by Philo of Byblos and Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea?

Total control over society imposed via a specific and artificially fabricated narrative: this is what an author of 1200 BCE says.

“A system seems to be emerging here, one that has endured throughout the centuries,” at least according to the various voices of very different people like Rudolf Steiner and Monsignor Viganò, the director of Radio Maria, Rumor, all the way down to Philo and Eusebius.

“This system is based on the control over the past, and through the management of knowledge of this past, it manages the present and plans the future.”

And that is not all.

“By managing and knowledge of the past, I guarantee and document my own infallibility.” If anyone disagrees with that, they will be harshly rebuked.

Biglino realized this at his own expense, starting with the publication of his first works at the beginning of 2010.

His were eloquent titles: *The Bible Does Not Talk about God*, *The Alien God of the Bible*, *There Is No Creation in the Bible*, *The Bible Is Not a Sacred text*.

And anyone who dares to challenge the infallibility of the official version is in for some serious trouble: “Those who try to question any of it, even if with very well researched evidence and documents, is ostracized and (understandably) attacked, in every possible way. Because infallibility rests precisely on this management of knowledge of the past, at least in its substance, must remain unchanged.”

Let’s be clear here: Mauro Biglino does not deal with the Great Reset at all.

He simply asks some questions. And he looks for some possible answers in a set of books written at least 2,500 years ago.

This is precisely what makes him such an interesting author, and now a very popular one as well: there are over 300,000 mentions of him on the web.

What have you done that is so sensational?

“Nothing at all, believe me. Sometimes, in fact, I feel like I have the most stupid ‘trade’ in the world.”

And what would that be?

“Reading the Bible. As it is. There is no need to invent anything. What the

Old Testament says couldn't be any clearer. It's all there, plain and simple, without any need to evoke mysterious and inexplicable facts or events.

Could this be the reason why, for some, it is so dangerous to hear what the Bible actually says?

The Beginnings: It All Started with the Translation of Genesis

“I control the past, and by managing knowledge of the past I can manage the present and plan the future.”

Is this possible?

Spinning the globe produces no particular answers. Dramatic images on television show the inexorable melting of the Arctic ice cap.

Is that us, that polar bear adrift on an ice raft among the icebergs?

The past seems to be a strange “book”, literally an endless one, in a continuous process of rewriting.

By the way, are we really so certain that we are facing such unprecedented climate change? Some invariably point out that Greenland, one of the coldest countries in the world and home to polar bears, has a kind of enigma in its very name.

Beware, say the ecologists: only climate change “deniers” can truly believe that Greenland was actually “green” at some point and benefited from a mild climate. They tell another story, recounting how the name Green Land was coined by the Norwegian Erik the Red to convince his men to follow him amid those lands, already very inhospitable a thousand years ago.

On the other hand, there is also no lack of those who point out that Renaissance maps already reproduce the geography of Antarctica and do so, amazingly, with an astonishing degree of detail. Evidently, then, the icy continent was already very well known as early as 1400. And kindly note that the Antarctic continent reproduced by Leonardo da Vinci is completely free of ice.

Polar bears and penguins. Does the natural history of the symbolic animals that live at the antipodes of the planet have something to tell to us?

It was only in 2014 that some geophysicists became convinced that the Earth had quite literally been engulfed by catastrophic cometary rains,

disrupting the planet's climate, about 12,000 years ago.

Another “reset” of apocalyptic proportions that would first have obscured the sun, causing a very long winter that lasted a hundred years, then melted the polar ice caps and caused the rise of sea levels? This cataclysm would have been responsible for sinking coastal cities, such as those that are now emerging into view from the coastal floors of the Indian Ocean.

Question upon question piling up, especially for readers of Paolo Rumor's book. The author places the beginning of our traceable history, or at least our presumable history, in a kind of Year Zero.

This Secret History would have been controlled, in an eminently discreet fashion, by this phantom “entity”, which, after having created dynastic empires and great civilizations, would also be behind the creation of none other than current modernity, including the European Union.

Nations, religions, wars, archaic beliefs and strenuous progress. Is someone really controlling the past to rule the present and shape the future?

A particularly interesting suggestion is offered by the book *The Bible Never Said That*, which Mauro Biglino wrote in 2017 with Lorena Forni, a philosopher of law and university professor in Milan.

The discovery: we have no idea just how much the Bible – theoretically a religious text – conditions, without us being aware of it, fundamental elements of our civic life. The same laws are promulgated by secular states.

Another bit of news has a somewhat amusing element. It would be lovely if the Old Testament actually confirmed the themes of public morality that jurists seemed to see in it. Did they simply make a colossal blunder?

Mauro Biglino replies to this in his usual fashion, by going through those pages and re-reading them in the original.

An unsettling exercise that leaves one dismayed.

There is no trace, among those verses, of any ethics that compare to ours. Nor is there any notion of spirituality to be found – a concept, moreover, that is foreign even to ancient Jewish culture, which gave no thought at all to the possibility of life after death.

This was even pointed out by such a highly-cultured priest as Catholic Don Ermis Segatti, a university theologian, who in 2016 spoke at a symposium on Biglino's studies held in Milan in a lecture hall packed with 600 enthusiasts.

A day full of surprises: appearing alongside Biglino were Segatti and other

luminaries of contemporary religious thought, like Orthodox Archbishop Avondios, the Waldensian biblical scholar Daniele Garrone, and the Chief Rabbi of Turin's Jewish Community, Ariel Di Porto.

“Among the most striking phrases uttered in that auditorium was the following: it is not at all clear which passage of the Bible the Apostle Paul was drawing from to arrive at the idea of original sin.”

I beg your pardon?

Is this alleged “incident” not at the foundation of the whole of Christianity? A faith understood as the historical redemption of humanity, guilty of that original sin?

Indeed it is. The effect is stunning. For two thousand years, we have lived with the interpretation of a story that, even according to representatives of religious culture, is based on what seems to be a fundamental misunderstanding.

If that is indeed the case, why has this misunderstanding, this misinterpretation, not been officially cleared up by now? Does this also have something to do with the conventional representation of our past, one used to manage the present and channel it toward a future that is just as controllable?

Mauro Biglino smiles again, holding in his hands the big book he has read and re-read, studied over and over again and, in the end, translated himself.

“These,” he says, “are still just hypotheses, though rigorously based, of course, on ancient Hebrew textuality.”

If believers still maintain that this book tells us about a God who is almighty and eternal, a God who created the heavens and the Earth from nothing, they are wrong. Without denying the possibility of the existence of a divine, transcendent creator, it must be noted that in that book, it is only written, literally, that several beings called Elohim reorganized a certain portion of territory, separating the waters from cultivatable land. This might sound like the construction of a dam.

Come on, let's be serious.

Mauro Biglino is absolutely serious. And he has been repeating the same thing for ten years. He opens the book and says: read it yourself. Don't limit yourself to having it read to you.

How does one stumble upon truth? Or rather, upon the bare naked textual truth? Obviously through familiarity with the mother tongue of those verses.

An adventure that began several years ago in the case of our Italian translator.

His fault? Curiosity, overwhelming already in high school.

Greek, Latin.

“That’s the way it is. Ancient languages have always fascinated me, right from my early school years.”

And then the turning point: his encounter with biblical Hebrew. Destiny?

“That depends on the point of view. Actually, while I was studying Hebrew, I was determined to learn Chinese as well.”

That’s really nice.

“Yes, Chinese! That’s why I turned to the Italian-Chinese Cultural Association in Turin.”

Precognition?

At the turn of the second and third millennium, the former Celestial Empire seemed to be on the verge of becoming the decisive player in the geopolitical history of the planet. We realized this with due delay. Today, the rest of the world is confronted with the pervasiveness of Chinese enterprise – and not only commercial – to the point of risking a dangerous collision with the other great empire, the Atlantic one.

But sometimes a simple unexpected event suddenly changes the course of events. In the case of our then-aspiring “sinologist”, a series of things determined the path he would follow.

“The Chinese course wasn’t going to begin for another six months. In the meantime I received the invitation for a meeting at the San Paolo publishing house.”

Farewell, Great Wall. At that point, his interest in the direct study of biblical sources took over.

“Ancient Hebrew had always fascinated me. I had approached it in various ways, beginning to read the Old Testament in the 1980s.”

Then a fateful door was opened in the Jewish Community of Turin.

“They were very kind and even made a teacher available to me.”

Lessons upon lessons: texts, notes, tests.

“I also started translating on my own, as a personal passion, as an exercise.”

And what an exercise it was. “I used a pencil to write – in Hebrew – the whole Book of Genesis.”

One line in Hebrew, another below it with the pronunciation, and then a third line with the literal translation by the student. The result: 400 pages.

“That was a bit like my first real creation. I truly cherish it with great joy and with all the emotion that comes with the memory of those very first steps.”

We can imagine the feeling.

“Then I moved on to the translation of Exodus.”

The prestigious Edizioni San Paolo, the Church’s official publishing house, had just republished it in an updated interlinear translation.

“I said to myself, well, I’ll try and translate that one as well. Then I’ll go check to see how much nonsense I wrote down.”

Little did he know that destiny was lurking in chapter 33, verse 16.

“The first word to the right was the term “elai”. Most likely a typo, resulting from the preceding verse (where ‘elai’, with the addition of the ending ‘vav’ means ‘to him’). The term ‘jiwwada’ (‘it shall be known’) is what should have been there. The translation into Italian was correct, it referred to the term ‘jiwwada’. But in the Hebrew it strangely said ‘elai’.”

A transcription error, perhaps?

“So I decided to write to the publisher, obviously with a lot of apprehension and humility.”

An email – the first of many – was thus sent to the Edizioni San Paolo, “in the hope this finds you well.”

Exodus: chapter 33, verse 16, page 195. A mistake?

“I told myself they’d never answer me!”

Never give up hope, because answer him they did.

“They responded to me surprisingly quickly, and they were very polite and accessible.”

The author of the letter was none other than the director of the entire line of books, Piergiorgio Ambrogio Beretta, a priest.

“I have taken note of your precious error report, thank you very much. I cannot imagine how such a mistake could have been made.”

That “elai” was out of place. It should indeed have said “jiwwada”.

Don Beretta’s promptness and accessibility of were heartwarming: “Do not hesitate to write to me directly to report any other errors.”

Mauro Biglino was left startled.

“You can imagine my excitement. I was doing my very first translations and receiving an answer like this, and from such an important publishing house, was first of all a great source of joy.”

Can you imagine? Resounding confirmation of the skills of the apprentice “mover of words” had come such an authoritative source.

“I certainly didn’t expect that. So I accepted the encouragement and continued translating Exodus. Every time I found something odd, I made a note.”

Once the translation was complete, the report to the publisher was sent off immediately.

“In that report I pointed out, for example, that in a certain passage there had been an inversion in the translation.”

In some words, a few letters seemed to have been replaced: “At one point there was a ‘*shin*’ instead of a ‘*lamed*’.”

In another verse, the letter “*nun*” appeared before the pronominal suffix: “Shouldn’t there be the letter “*yod*’ instead?”

And so on.

In short, the Hebrew of Exodus got examined under a microscope.

There was nothing, though, that could remove the novice translator’s sense of reverent awe.

“I am certain,” he wrote to his editorial contact, “that you will forgive me if I have wasted your time and made mistakes myself in these reports.”

No problem at all.

“I checked your reports carefully right away, and I readily admit that you are correct across the board,” was the director’s response. “I have transcribed everything on the copy of Exodus that we are using to prepare an eventual reprinting. Write to me again, if necessary. My kindest regards and best wishes.”

So you see? Maximum cordiality and a spirit of collaboration, with no unnecessary frills.

These exchanges continued for a while, always with mutual courtesy – until the fateful pace-changing day arrived: “Might we see some of your translations?”

A request that provoked in Mauro Biglino what he still defines today as “a joyful internal thrill.”

What to do?

“I took four sheets of that pencil-written Genesis I had written, made photocopies, folded them, put them in an envelope and sent them off with my heart pounding in my chest. I have terrible handwriting, I was afraid they would not even be able to decipher it.”

Again, the response was quick.

“The literal translation you executed corresponds almost exactly to ours. Where do you live? Could I have your full address and telephone number? I include my contact information below. A more personal meeting could be useful.”

And thus it began.

“We started working together. I went to their headquarters and we had our ‘more personal meeting’. They had to check first that, in addition to Hebrew, I also knew Greek and Latin, as comparisons with those two languages are indispensable.”

After that first meeting, the first editorial contracts come in, starting with the revised and corrected redaction of Exodus, an edition that benefitted from the supervision of Giovanni Salmeri, a historian of theological thought at the University of Tor Vergata in Rome.

Among the credits, we read, “Special thanks to the solidarity of my friend from Turin, Mauro Biglino, who verified the Hebrew text, the Greek version and all editorial work of the final drafts.”

High emotion indeed.

And after Exodus, it was time for Genesis. “A most cordial thanks go to our friend from Turin, Mauro Biglino”, the acknowledgments note – “for having competently overseen most of the editorial work for the final draft.”

Shivers again: “Do you understand what that meant to me? To be a part of such a prestigious publishing house?”

It was a small step from there to the first real contracts.

“Once it was verified that I knew how to do a whole variety of things, they gave me my first translation contract for the so-called Five Meghillot, the five books of the Old Testament. They listed me, Mauro Biglino, as the author of the Italian interlinear translation.”

This editorial debut already contained a hint of things to come and of what Biglino himself would later become.

After the usual citation by Professor Salmeri, credit is given to “the friend

from Turino, Mauro Biglino, for his contribution to the preparation of these Meghillot, first with the provisional drafting of the interlinear version, upon which the subsequent finer work was based.”

“Labor limae”: these are the key words.

Could it be, then, that it was precisely this art of chiseling that would one day fatefully separate the translator from the publisher?

“It’s true. For the Meghillot, we did the detail work. I would go to their offices and we would go over the text together.”

Seated at the same table, side-by-side, Mauro Biglino and Don Beretta did what the publishers themselves defined as “the meticulous proof-reading over the final draft of the texts” – namely, those in Hebrew and Greek, along with the editorial work in general.

“So I was the one who had provided the translation on which then the ‘detail work’ was done, as well as seeing to the accurate structuring of the Greek text.”

The Five Meghillot were now finished, and a new contract followed three years later. This was for another 12 books, those of the so-called “Minor Prophets.”

Without fail, at the end of the book, the now-familiar credits appeared once more: “To our friend from Turin, Mauro Biglino, who helped us with these Minor Prophets, first providing the provisional draft of the interlinear version, upon which, later, the finer was done, and then his meticulous proofing of the final draft of the Hebrew and Greek texts and of the entire edition.”

“Of course, big publishing houses always maintain the contractual power to intervene in the work of their collaborators. They could have done this in my case as well.”

In the contract, it was plainly stated in black and white: “Assignment is subject to approval.”

Meaning: “It was up to them to decide whether my translation was acceptable, whether they liked it or not.”

And not only that: “I also had to stay faithful to the original.”

He needed to guarantee “the authenticity of the translation, assuming all responsibility for it.”

What was truly important for Mauro Biglino was that, in those publications

– intended for the educated public (e.g., university professors and theology students) – Edizioni San Paolo never published rash or improper translations, nothing not justified by the textuality of the original Hebrew.

“I’ve said many times in recent years that there are terms that, in my opinion, should not be translated. It’s a question of integrity, since we do not know exactly what they mean. So honesty requires leaving them just as they are written.”

The glory of God?

“No – The Kavod of Yahweh. That, and nothing else, is what is actually written”.

Mauro Biglino praises the exegetical and philological accuracy of Edizioni San Paolo: “Regarding the volumes we worked on together, while I was doing my editorial work for them, the term ‘Elohim’ was left that way in Italian as well. They did not translate it as the word ‘God’.”

The same thing goes for the word ‘Yahweh’. “That one also always remained ‘Yahweh’ and was not translated as ‘the Lord’ as is the case with ordinary editions of the Bible – even though translating Yahweh as ‘the Lord’ is a complete fabrication.”

In the editions of the interlinear Bible, everything remained intact.

“My greatest satisfaction was that, in those volumes, ‘Elohim’ always stayed ‘Elohim’.

Another controversial term, Ruach, is very often rendered as “Spirit”, thus introducing the concept of transcendence into the Bible.

“In those editions, however, even ‘Ruach’ was not translated: it stayed ‘Ruach’ – as, for example, in Genesis 1:2 where ‘the Ruach of the Elohim hovers over the waters’.”

The implications are noteworthy.

Somewhere in Mauro Biglino’s brain, a light bulb must have turned on. If the Ruach is not “the Spirit” and the Kavod is not “the glory”, then what are they?

And above all, if Yahweh is not God, then... who is he?

Will we see that, by avoiding the conventional translation of those terms, the Bible turns out to be telling an entirely different story?

Meanwhile, the translator still fondly remembers all the emotions of that time, working side-by-side with the editors of Edizioni San Paolo.

“The mere fact that those words were not translated, even then, was a source of great satisfaction for me, because, in fact, I told myself that those terms cannot and should not be translated. All attempted translations are absolute fabrications, and it is a pleasure to see that, even to this day, those particular term remain untranslated.”

But now, the seed had been planted and the Old Testament had begun to reveal a new dimension to Mauro Biglino, one with a completely different meaning.

A hypothesis began to form: what if that story were consistent? What if it were possible to deduce, from the context, the true identity of those figures in the Bible and the real function of some of those untranslatable “accessories”?

The “Ruach” for example – a sort of spaceship, perhaps?

And the Kavod? A war machine? A fighter jet of some kind?

All questions that, one after the other, were ending up in the drafts of what was to become a possible book, developed autonomously, the first of a long series.

The title: *The Book that Will Forever Change Our Ideas about the Bible*.

It would be released in that fateful year – 2010.

In the meantime, Edizioni San Paolo had made other proposals to the translator.

“If you agree,” wrote Don Beretta, “I would like to ask you to begin the translation of Joshua and Judges.”

So he started working and translated those two biblical texts as well, bringing the total number of books of the Old Testament edited for the Catholic publishing house to nineteen.

Then that ‘other’ book finally came out, the one promising to ‘forever change’ our ideas about the Bible.

It goes without saying that the translator lost that last assignment for them, the one which had only recently been given to him. The Books of Joshua and Judges would no longer be published, at least not in the version edited by Biglino for editions based on interlinear translation.

Understandable. That “detail work”, although done as freelance work for another publisher, had become much more.

“I completely understand Edizioni San Paolo. After that first book written on my own, they could no longer accept that my translations continue to be part of the collections of a publishing house like theirs, a Catholic one.”

In short, it was an abrupt farewell.

“However,” says Mauro Biglino ten years on, “I have to say that our relationship was a cordial one, even on a human level, especially with Don Beretta.”

And not only that.

“Although they never published my last two works, they were kind enough to pay me for them. They could very well have said, ‘We don’t like them,’ and I wouldn’t have been able to do anything about it. But they were unfailingly fair to the end.”

Bereshit: In the Beginning

“Bereshit”, it says: in the beginning.

It is with this sweet-sounding word that the most famous book of all time begins. Or rather, that large collection of books which, according to the great monotheistic religions, contains the story of the beginning of time.

To be or not to be, from zero to one. First, there was nothing, then all things came into being. As if photographing a precise and chronologically identifiable moment, the one when history and the universe itself, at a certain point in time, began to exist.

Genesis: origins.

Literally: “Bereshit bara Elohim et hashamayim veet ha’arets.” A memorable sentence, regularly translated as follows: “In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth.”

Fascinating words that have resonated with us for at least two millennia. Isn’t it comforting to believe we know where we come from?

Perhaps the decisive word here is precisely that: *believe*.

The vast biblical corpus, in its Christian version, also includes the four Gospels classified as canonical. The intent is clear: to directly connect the Old Testament, in Hebrew, to the New Testament, written much later and entirely focused on one person, identified as the savior of mankind, of unfortunate humanity in need of being saved.

Saved from what?

From itself, obviously. Or rather, from the primal burden of an alleged original sin.

The last of the evangelical texts to be accepted and included in the Christian religious canon, John, opens –rather like the Bible itself – with a spectacular phrase:

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.”

On a strictly literary level, that is a powerfully poetic suggestion.

Both John and Genesis seem to be talking about the same thing: the origins of life.

“In the beginning” is what they both say. Or at least, that’s what we read in

the translations. “En arché” in Greek. “Bereshit” in Hebrew.

For now, it is better to leave out the Gnostic Gospel of John, conventionally attributed to the disciple “beloved of Jesus”, yet actually written – no one knows by whom – in the Hellenic language at least one hundred years after the events in Jerusalem.

That was an era in which the dominant Greek culture, through Platonism, had introduced the notion of metaphysical transcendence, which conversely was completely absent in the biblical tradition.

Returning to the Old Testament, the entire biblical story starts with that one word, which seems to have been carved in the air since the dawn of time.

Bereshit.

The beginning of everything?

And what if, in that context, “Bereshit” only meant *at the beginning of this story*, the one we are now going to tell? So, not a universal history of “creation”, but only that of our little group of people?

Indeed: creation.

Are we sure that Genesis really talks about that?

No, we are not sure of that at all. At least not everyone. And among these is Mauro Biglino.

There is no creation in the Bible he explicitly titled one of his first and disruptive “heretical” books, published in 2012. The subtitle: “Genesis tells us another story.”

Really? Is that so?

Yes, in fact, says the translator, who generally tends to give credence to the biblical authors when their story seems to be substantially coherent.

“Why on earth,” he insists, “would they have veiled their truths, delving into the depths of some cryptic language, when they lived in a largely illiterate society. Wouldn’t it make more sense to think that their primal focus was simply to preserve the memory of events that had actually taken place?”

Creation, however, is not one of them.

Is that possible?

Yes, says Biglino: just analyze the verb from which that idea is derived.

“Bara”, which is pronounced “ba-RA”.

It can have different meanings, as reported by all major dictionaries. It can mean to form, to choose, to divide.

“But in no case whatsoever can ‘bara’ mean the creation of something out

of nothing.”

If Genesis isn't lying, then it was the much later historical manipulation of a theological matrix, based on distorting translations, that has it saying something else.

In any case, Biglino wonders why the Bible would need to tell tall tales. He admits, of course, that in several places we find possible exaggerations, especially concerning the deeds of figures that the text is celebrating. In many other passages, however, the Bible seems to maintain firm neutrality, in some points even disturbingly. It is difficult to think that certain stories were invented, or that they were rendered using deliberately symbolic language, not to be taken literally.

The Bible is almost always explicitly clear, calling a spade a spade.

Could this not also be the case for the alleged “creation” story, which, according to Biglino, is no tale of creation at all?

“Bereshit”, in the beginning.

It was the 80s of the last century, and the translator-to-be was already struggling over that fascinating word. The Beginning.

Outside, the world was in the throes of great passions. Italy was enchanted by Paolo Rossi's goals, during the World Cup that, through the folkloristic celebration that is soccer, marked the definitive end of Franco's dictatorship in Spain. Another dictatorship, Argentina's, was coming to an end as well, shot down by cannon fire from Mrs. Thatcher, who was determined to take back the remote Falkland Islands.

A great word was spreading everywhere: democracy.

Alongside a new Polish pontiff, Karol Wojtyla, American President Ronald Reagan had brandished it as a weapon, turning it against the Soviet empire.

Nuclear terror, Cold War? All of that would collapse soon later, precisely in the name democracy, thanks to a nearly twin word: Perestroika.

Another giant, Mikhail Gorbachev, would be the interpreter of all this. This great thaw would start at a spectacular super-summit with Reagan, one that had been organized (the irony of history) in one of the coldest places on the planet, Reykjavik, the tiny capital of a the small frozen country of Iceland.

Events were evolving fast and everything seemed to point humanity

towards a New Beginning.

So, another “Bereshit”?

Of course, there was no shortage of sceptics. Reagan and Wojtyla themselves had survived assassination attempts. A few years later, two extremely significant personalities were murdered: in Sweden, Prime Minister Olof Palme, a champion of democracy and opposed to the oligarchic configuration of the upcoming European Union; and in Africa, the independence leader Thomas Sankara, the young revolutionary president who had transformed the very poor Upper Volta, a colonial province of France, into the proud Burkina Faso of “pure men”, ready to redeem their future.

What caused Sankara’s downfall? Financial credit- He had demanded the cancellation of the foreign debt that was crushing African countries. The big problem? Sankara also thrilled and inspired immense numbers of Africans, thus endangering the dominant system embodied by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund.

Almost in parallel, his Swedish counterpart pledged state monetary sovereignty to support troubled companies and thus avoid an explosion of unemployment.

At the time, in fact, the term “public debt” was not yet a bogeyman.

But things would soon change. They *had* to change. And even the standard-bearer of Soviet democracy, the courageous Gorbachev, was overthrown in a coup.

The shock reached its culmination at the end of the decade, when at the order of Deng Xiaoping, Chinese tanks crushed the peaceful student protest in Tiananmen Square.

At the time, Mauro Biglino was still far from being interested in learning the Chinese language, and certain suspicions – evoked rather suggestively some thirty years later in Rumor’s book – were not even vaguely on the horizon.

And yet, could an attentive eye have spotted, even then, in the 80s, the very first signs of an invisible project? Were the early seeds of what today even a high prelate like Monsignor Viganò calls the Great Reset already being planted?

Those accustomed to observe history from afar know that, ultimately, Western democracy is but a system in its early infancy, or little more. After

centuries of absolutism (indeed, millennia), the rule of law with universal suffrage is still a very recent conquest. As an idea, through the dramatic flashes of the French and American revolutions, it dates back to just the end of the 1700s.

And before that?

An invariable pattern: the dominion of the few over the many.

Since when? Since virtually forever, from the very dawn of traceable historiography.

In the essay “Dominio”, the great intellectual Francesco Saba Sardi, a highly learned polyglot translator of some of the most important writers in the world, traces the current system of power back to the “discovery” of agriculture, which rendered land ownership of great importance for the first time. Once settled, these former nomads gave rise to unprecedented social organization, useful to the new standard: the ancient wandering hunters and gatherers had substantially transformed into sedentary and submissive servants, farmers or soldiers. Consequently, in the Neolithic age, war was also born. Proof of this is in the discovery of collective burials, in which, for the first time, groups of skeletons with fractured skulls were found.

According to Saba Sardi, the institution of the first primitive religions can also be dated back to this time. They were the instrument of power used by the new leaders, the King-Priests, to exercise their dominion over others, holding strategic information (on agricultural practices, for example). And they did so as a monopoly, without sharing information with the community of neo-subjects destined to work, defend or conquer land.

These are hypotheses that scholars are debating in the light of new archeological discoveries. Some of these, such as the discovery of the great Turkish site of Göbekli Tepe, near the Syrian border, seem to be forcing scientists to push the date of the adoption of agriculture back substantially. Göbekli Tepe dates back almost 12,000 years.

This archeological site is a stone’s throw from a river that needs no introduction: the Euphrates. The river of the ever-mysterious Sumerians, a civilization that seems to have appeared out of nowhere, already perfectly formed and possessing very advanced skills.

Among these were agriculture and the widespread technological use of hydraulic systems for irrigation. Not to mention the knowledge of writing, laws and architecture.

According to scholar Zecharia Sitchin, the so-called Sumerian gods – the Anunna, or Anunnaki – made Homo sapiens through the use of genetic engineering.

For Sitchin, the Anunna were not divine beings, but “ancient astronauts”. They were great beer drinkers and had introduced the cultivation of wheat. Even paleontologists confess that there are no intermediate steps between edible wheat and its prehistoric ancestor, wild spelt.

So once again: do these “origin stories” of the Sumerian-Akkadian civilization recount the beginning (“bereshit”) of a kind of zootechnical breeding program?

Mauro Biglino asked himself the same question, struggling – from a very early age – with the enigmas of the other great Mesopotamian narration, the biblical one.

A Mesopotamian one?

In a certain sense, yes. If we consider that Genesis was written during a historical exile, the so-called Babylonian captivity or shortly thereafter, between the 7th and 6th centuries BCE. The text, which is considered to have been re-worked in Judea, is supposed to have originated on the basis of oral stories, borrowed directly from contact with the civilizations of the Euphrates.

“One of my few certain convictions,” says Mauro Biglino, “is that history has to be re-written. For years there has been an ongoing discussion on the need, for example, to re-date the time of the construction of the great Egyptian pyramids and the Sphinx of the Giza plateau. All this will be defined sooner or later. But beyond whatever the conclusion of this process may be, the fact remains that, even now, archeology is bringing to light many elements that force us to re-write history, at least as it has been presented to us so far.”

Are you talking about Göbekli Tepe?

“Of course. That discovery is one of those undeniable facts. Its location in time compels us to re-think, clearly and with no uncertainty, the dating of the origin of these civilizations, connected above all to the Egyptian pyramids and the Sumerian-Akkadian constructions.”

For Biglino, the discovery of a center like this one in Turkey, so important and complex (dated several thousand years earlier than the three important pyramids of Giza), “requires us to re-visit the entire system of history as it

has so far been told.”

Göbekli Tepe, the Euphrates, Mesopotamia: and Genesis?

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,” we read in typical translations. “And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.”

Then something happens: the first 11 chapters, the ones that describe the so-called “biblical pre-history,” talk about the alleged creation, original sin, and then a Great Flood.

Events that are deeply rooted in our collective imagination, and have been for millennia, thanks principally to religious accounts: a divinity created human beings and then gave them a lush garden full of food.

The Garden of Eden.

Biglino suggests caution: the term “Eden” indicates a rather precise geographical location, a vast region located between Mesopotamia and the Caucasus.

“In addition to the Bible,” he explains, “the term ‘Eden’ is also found in Sumerian-Akkadian texts, where it appears as ‘E-Din’, usually translated as ‘the house of the righteous’.”

And by “righteous”, the scholar specifies, they obviously meant “those of the lineage of the Commanders, meaning the biblical Elohim, who in fact correspond to the Sumerian-Akkadian Anunna or Anunnaki.”

And how is it that, at a certain point, this Gan Eden is transformed into the Garden of Eden, the Earthly Paradise?

“That is the result of a subsequent passage through various linguistic forms: the Iranian language refers to “pairidaeza”, a fenced and protected place. From this term we move on to the Greek “paradeisos”, which the Greek authors employed to indicate those closed, fenced and protected gardens of the lords of Babylon.”

Now the final passage: “From the Greek ‘paradeisos’ we arrived at the ‘paradisus’ of the Latin Vulgate, to then arrive at the point of translating the term into the so-called ‘vulgar languages’ as ‘paradise’.”

A primeval and perfect place of absolute bliss? Yes, according to religions. But this is quite an imaginative view, according to Biglino, who has been studying this case for decades.

To begin with, there are many *Gans* in ancient books. The one pertaining to Adam and Eve, the one located in the region of Eden, was just one of several “enclosed and protected gardens” on Earth.

“So the Bible is telling us about one of the *Gans* existing on the planet,” confirms Biglino, “but we can imagine the existence of several others.”

For example?

“The first one was probably located in the center of Africa, or in the southernmost latitudes of the black continent, where the first genetic experiments to manufacture *Homo sapiens* took place.

Genetic experiments to “make” us?

Biglino is more than convinced of that. Or rather, he is quite certain that this is exactly what many ancient books talk about, including the Bible.

Genetic experiments for the purpose of “manufacturing” sapiens, which took place on special sites, specifically the *Gans*.

There was the one in Eden and the one in Africa, but there were more.

“Another *Gan* was probably located in central America, while yet another one must have been in the Far East. This might have been located at the birthplace of the great Vedic religion, which essentially recounts the same concept of the ‘manufacturing’ of mankind.”

So even the Vedas allude to all this?

“Yes, precisely. Science itself tells us of various human strains that seem to have appeared in various parts of the world.”

The dawn of this hypothetical Great Project?

“We could, in fact, speculate about an experiment that may have been conducted all over the planet, an experiment from which *Homo sapiens* would have emerged as the final product. First made in central-southern Africa and then, probably, further perfected in the Middle East.”

Reading and listening to Mauro Biglino can make your head spin. There is a sense of entering some sort of vortex of parallel knowledge, one in which everything suddenly seems within reach, at least on a theoretical level.

Analogical thinking and connections. Disturbing reconstructions and hypotheses, but ones that feed the mind and force it to function differently, excluding nothing and verifying every possibility.

What if the expulsion from Paradise would explain the sudden mysterious appearance of the Sumerian civilization?

Is it possible that Genesis, which was based on stories heard there, on the banks of the Euphrates, was hinting at these presumed ‘genetically modified’ origins of the first small populations that colonized the country of Sumer?

Was the biblical Eden really so unique and important, as tradition would have us believe, mentioned as it is in such an ancient text, one so fundamental for our culture?

Not at all.

Mauro Biglino had intuited this even before starting his patient “detail work” for Edizioni San Paolo, hunched over those verses of Genesis and Exodus.

He had noticed the striking parallels, for example, that can easily be found by retracing the Greek classics, starting with the Homeric works.

One above all: on the Island of the Phaeacian, the garden of Alcinous, who welcomes shipwrecked Ulysses in the *Odyssey*.

“Here we realize that, just as with the biblical Gan Eden, the garden of Alcinous was a place where a special cultivation of vegetables and fruit trees was conducted, one which was carried out with no interruption throughout the year.”

Guaranteed abundance, for all seasons.

“Yes, production was continuous, and while fruits were being harvested from some trees, flowers were forming on others to begin new production.”

A real paradise, we would say today. And it was protected by a demarcation.

“Yes, this garden of the *Odyssey* as well is enclosed, and it, too, is irrigated by waterways.”

Just who was this lord, Alcinous?

“He was of divine lineage, so just like the Adamites he possessed part of the genetic heritage deriving from this group of ‘divinities’. Alcinous was a descendant of Poseidon, the so-called ‘God of the Sea’, corresponding to the Lord of the Waters (or of the ‘lower parts’), or the southern regions of the planet. The Sumerian-Akkadians knew this figure by the name of Enki.”

In short, it is no coincidence, you say, that such a fabulous garden, able to bear fruit 12 months a year, was the property of a lord like Alcinous, who was descended from Poseidon-Neptune, deities who change their names depending on the regions in which they appeared?

Precisely. The Sumerian Enki and the Greek Poseidon, Biglino says, really

can be the same figure.

Nothing so strange, after all, for those who work regularly with certain books. Biglino has already spoken clearly on the biblical Mikael, the archangel Michael of the Christians, a kind of waltz of ancient divinities: Odin, Belenus and Apollo himself.

Is your head finally starting to spin?

But isn't the almost mythical character of the biblical Gan Eden somehow being diminished by this interpretation? Not to worry. These are all recognizable symptoms. They immediately appear the moment we agree to follow the hypotheses advanced by Mauro Biglino, book after book, over ten long years.

Speaking of which, the fact that Homeric and biblical literature perfectly mirror each other is compellingly explained at length in his book *The False Testament*, published in 2016.

“Through a careful reading of the Homeric poems,” says the author, “we can see how, when we talk about the so-called divinities, the text is in fact referring to figures that can be superimposed on the biblical heroes. They have the same technology, the same attitudes, the same needs.”

This is how it is with Biglino: you start in Eden and find yourself in the *Odyssey* in the blink of an eye. And we have not yet even touched on the real heart of the Genesis story, the part that concerns us most closely: Adam and Eve.

Theoretically, the first couple of humanity and possibly our ancestors.
And their very famous unforgivable *original sin*.

Eve, the “Snake” and the Imaginary Apple

In fairy tales, animals can speak. From Aesop to Phaedrus to Walt Disney.

The small animal that appears in Genesis is a snake. More than speak, he acts, causing the worst disaster in history, forever compromising the carefree happiness of the human race, which had until then been all but immortal.

And all this because of an apple, apparently. An apple which, as a brand, incidentally, made the fortune of the well-known corporation founded by Steve Jobs.

The fable is unforgettable: that idyllic condition – perfect bliss, untouched by danger – is destroyed by a mouthful of fruit.

This was no innocent nibble, since this was forbidden fruit, one that should not even have been touched, by God’s own orders.

Disobedience was fatal and the punishment horrible: perpetual condemnation to a life of torment, fatigue, suffering, until the fatal outcome. Death, from that moment on, became an unavoidable destiny.

“Not bad as a first performance by our famous ‘God of love’, who, religion tells us, loves his creatures unconditionally. At the first little mistake, he expelled them both from Eden, forcing them into an existence of suffering, with an ‘expiration date’, concluding in death.”

Biglino is joking.

“Of course. Because the one mentioned in Genesis was certainly not ‘God’, nor were Adam and Eve our ancestors, and the aforementioned snake was certainly not a reptile. In the Talmud, it is even written that he was originally gifted with limbs. And by the way, there was never any ‘apple’ mentioned in those verses.”

Really?

I can already hear the inevitable and unvarying response: read the Bible. Do it for your own good.

“The infamous apple eaten by Eve doesn’t exist in the Hebrew Bible.”

Then where did we get this idea?

“The concept came in the fourth century CE, when Jerome translated the

Bible into Latin.”

Sophronius Eusebius Hieronymus, known as Saint Jerome, was a Roman biblicalist, translator, theologian and Christian monk. A Church Father, and a Doctor of the Church as well, he translated part of the Old Testament into Latin, but using the text that had been re-written in Greek by the Jews of the colony of Elephantine in Egypt.

So this invented apple is entirely the fruit of Jerome’s imagination?

It would perhaps be more correct to say that it was just a spectacular misunderstanding.

“Writing about the Tree of Good and Evil, Jerome used the Latin term ‘malum’, which has a double meaning: it can mean both ‘evil’ and – you guessed it – ‘apple tree’.”

There was no stopping the game of telephone that was then played.

“From that moment onwards, we started talking about an *apple*, which then definitively became tradition.”

Was ‘Paradise Lost’, then, because of an apple?

“No. In ancient Hebrew, ‘taking the fruit’ does not mean eating the fruit. It means consummating a sexual act.”

With a snake, in this case?

“Of course not.”

With whom, then? Wasn’t it the ‘serpent’ that tempted the unfortunate Eve?

“First, we’ve got to agree on terms. Who could this snake be?”

To understand this, Biglino stresses, there are a few operations that need to be performed. For starters, we need to dispel the notion of any ‘fruit’ in the story, almost comically derived from the Latin translation. And then, once again, rely on the context that the Old Testament so consistently describes.

It can also be very useful, for instance, to proceed backwards.

For example: what is the point of this story about the snake and the apple? To create a sense of inferiority, one derived from having committed a terrible sin.

The original sin, in fact.

“The concept of original sin,” explains Biglino, “is not a biblical one. It was elaborated by theology. And above all it serves the purpose of creating a sense of guilt in the individual, through which he can then be conditioned and led to respect the rules, with the possibility of reconciling with the alleged

‘heavenly father’, through intermediaries who, naturally, are members of a structure: the ecclesiastical hierarchy.”

To put it plainly, that “sin” is completely non-existent in the Hebrew Bible.

“Precisely. The concept of original sin does not appear in Genesis.”

And the story regarding that famous act of disobedience?

“It refers to a completely different situation. Adam and Eve make a choice, and as a result of that choice they are free to reproduce independently.”

They “ate the fruit” but it was not an apple.

“The act performed by Eve seems – even according to the Jewish tradition – to be a sexual one, through which she joins with the so-called serpent.”

Does she do so willingly?

“It doesn’t say. Tradition sometimes describes this act as truly sexually violent.”

In other words, the ‘snake’ may have raped Eve.

“In any case, it was from this sexual union of Eve with the ‘serpent’ that Cain was born. It is after this act that the Elohim say, ‘Now the Adam has become like one of us.’”

In fact, the guardians of the Garden (not “God” but the Elohim) are quite afraid: “They fear that the Adamites may have access to the so-called Tree of Life.”

So we are not talking about an apple tree, nor some other plant species.

Biglino is among those who interpret the expression “Tree of Life” as something quite different, namely the “technologies that guaranteed a very long life, like that of the Elohim themselves.” In all likelihood, adds the scholar, the Tree of Life refers to some genetic technology “that gave control over the length of life, obviously to prolong it, rendering it as long as the life of the Elohim.”

That makes sense.

“If this had happened, if the first Adamites had gained access to those genetic practices, they would have become unmanageable.”

This interpretation, Biglino points out, is even present in the notes of the Jerusalem Bible. This authoritative Dominican exegesis, put out by the School of Biblical Studies in Jerusalem, “states that, in effect, the expulsion of the Adamites was not a punishment for something they had done but rather a sort of preventive decision.”

And this, Biglino adds, means precisely that “the Elohim had to make that

decision to avoid the development of a situation they would have been unable to manage.”

Forget about original sin. Exile from the Gan was motivated by far more compelling reasons, of the kind that we would define today as *political* in nature (or even *zootechnical*, borrowing the terminology of those who tend to perceive precise yet never explicit plots of dominant groups, the source of all the great events in human history).

Original sin. Sense of guilt.

Here we seem to come to a fork in the road: on one side the biblical narration, on the other the subsequent theological interpretation.

“That same passage,” continues Biglino, “is interpreted differently by the apostle Paul, and he reads it as the moment when guilty act was originated, one which would then extend to all humankind.”

From St. Paul to St. Augustine, the theory of original sin has come a long way.

“Of course. The complete articulated formulation of this concept was the product of Augustine of Hippo.”

For centuries, the tale of the apple has been the central element. We are a wretched species because we are guilty. It would have been enough for our progenitor, poor Eve, not to allow herself to be tempted by that infamous fruit, offered to her by a reptile.

So what is this really about?

“In all seriousness, this ‘serpent’ was one of the Elohim who belonged to the faction of those who were hostile to, or even an enemy of, the Elohim who ruled in the Gan Eden.”

Put this way, Genesis takes on a whole new form.

Biglino again quotes the theologian Ermis Segatti, professor at the Faculty of Theology of Northern Italy: “Segatti says that the ‘clan’ aspect of the concept of original sin – that is to say, this sin being passed on from father to son – is utterly refuted in the New Testament,” even if, unfortunately, Segatti adds, “Theology has made extensive use of it.”

Similar notations come from the Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Community of Turin, Ariel Di Porto. “He confirmed that in Judaism, the concept of original sin does not even exist.”

This is confirmed by the most important Italian Protestant biblical scholar,

Daniele Garrone, co-author of prestigious dictionaries of ancient Hebrew. For Garrone, it is not even clear where St. Paul got this concept of sin to begin with.

Once original sin taken out of the picture, one thing remains: the “snake”.

What suggests that the writers of Genesis were alluding to a particular figure, capable of mating with a human being of the female sex?

In the past, says Biglino, as a premise, the snake always had a positive connotation: being an animal that nests in the ground, it symbolized the individual who digs and goes deep into knowledge.

“The term ‘snake’, in fact, also has the meaning of *possessor of knowledge*. The double serpent could therefore represent profound knowledge, with particular reference to the double helix of DNA.”

So would this be a way to allude directly to genetics?

“This is true deep knowledge, the knowledge possessed above all by geneticists, who know the most intimate part of human structure. From there, the representation of the snake then came to symbolize those who deal with this type of information and who possess this kind of technology. In essence, the art of medicine.”

We are reminded of the words of Professor Safran at the time of the cloning of Dolly, the sheep: Remember how Adam and Eve came into the world.

In truth, Biglino specifies, it was only the female who was born in the “earthly paradise”. The Bible states, in fact, that Adam “was placed” in Gan Eden. This would suggest that he was from somewhere else and was put there, in that “fenced and protected garden” located in the region of Eden, at some later point in the story.

As for the female, Eve, Genesis says that “she was made” (in other words, manufactured), using a “curved lateral part” of the male, who had been sedated and put into a state of “deep sleep”. Anesthesia.

“The Gan Eden was an experimental laboratory,” Biglino summarizes. “The Elohim, the Bible tells us, produced every kind of tree that gave good edible fruit.”

In that laboratory, then, they experimented with food – both vegetable and animal – to be used for their workers, that is to say, humanity, which they had “created” through genetic engineering.

In addition to the Tree of Life, according to the Bible, the Gan Eden also

had another tree, that of the knowledge of good and evil.

Here, too, things must be understood properly.

“Some Hebrew exegesis, such as that of Amos Luzzatto, says that the expression ‘good and evil’ does not refer to the ethical concept of the two terms but rather to the physiopathology of the human body. In other words, the knowledge of good and evil indicates the experience of feeling good and ill.”

In this representation of the tree, the implicit concept seems to be an elementary one. “As long as they were inside that enclosed and protected place, the Adamites did not know physical suffering. And according to a particular Jewish exegesis, the antediluvian patriarchs remained young in appearance until their death.”

The troubles begin with the expulsion from paradise, due – so it would seem – to the fear that the new “manufactured” species, once it had achieved the capacity to reproduce autonomously, could “raise its head,” do things on their own, and perhaps even acquire the “technologies of long life,” thus rivalling their creators, the Elohim, in terms of longevity.

“The Adamites,” Biglino reiterates, “are driven out because they had become reproductively independent. This should never have happened. And, above all, the breeding between the Adamites and a member of the lineage of the Elohim, which in the Bible is represented by the ‘snake’, should never have happened either. Their interbreeding was the real cause behind the expulsion of the Adamites from Gan Eden.”

It is no coincidence, Biglino adds, that the commander of the ‘garden’ tells the Adamites, “I will put enmity between your lineage and that of the serpent.”

So, the scholar observes, we are talking about two lineages, two distinct groups in conflict with each other.

“The lineage of the serpent is the one directly descended from the sexual act that the serpent – a rival Elohim – had performed with Eve, which resulted in the birth of Cain. Later on, Adam and Eve had other children, but while Cain was the son of Eve and the Serpent, the others were of direct Adamite lineage.”

Moreover, the adversities of the Adamite group – a sort of super-sapiens symbolized by the two archetypal progenitors (Adam and Eve) – began well

before the encounter with the ‘snake’ and the non-existent apple.

“In Genesis, chapter 2,” Biglino reminds us, “it is said that the Elohim gave all the animals to Adam so that he could name them. It is in this chapter that the Elohim realize that the company of animals is not enough for Adam.”

It is, then, more and more unlikely that the lord of Gan was some omniscient God who first needed to observe Adam at work before understanding that he needed a woman.

“According to the biblical account, for a time there were only males and animals in the Gan Eden. What sorts of scenes were the Elohim subjected to?”

A reasonable question.

According to Rashi, Adam had had intercourse with all the animals, but he was not satisfied until he joined with Eve.

Then, finally, the ladies appeared.

“Once they had ‘made’ Eve, one fine day they presented her to Adam. And he said, according to the text, ‘This time it is bone of my own bones and flesh of my flesh.’”

This time?

“With those words, it is clearly stated that, before Eve, Adam had been offered several females that were not satisfactory to him. The expression ‘this time’ appears in Jewish translations as ‘finally’, precisely to indicate that only at that moment had Adam received a female suitable for him, made from his own genetic heritage.”

Apparently, the previous ones hadn’t been very exciting.

“The Sumerian-Akkadian accounts, from which the biblical story derives, tell us how the so-called divinities had made various attempts to produce the so-called Adam.”

Many of the first attempts, those texts say, did not produce the expected result.

“The first experiments resulted in defective men. There were those who could not close their eyes, those who could not close their hands, those who had a twisted spine, who could not hold their urine. And there were some born without genital organs.”

A kind of horror show.

“One of the most disastrous experiments actually occurred with the genetic material of Enki, one of the two sons of the lord of the empire, and it was

only after several attempts that the genetic engineer, a female Anunnaki, was able to produce a complete and fully operational Adam.”

Is everything clear now?

Is there any trace left of that sweet (and very paternalistic) chauvinistic tale narrating our origins?

The Biglino method works like this: ‘pretend’ that the Bible is simply telling the truth.

Do we have any proof or evidence?

Absolutely not. We don’t even know who, exactly when, or even in what language those codices were written.

But they do tell a very different story from the one that was handed down to us by theology, one, it would seem, that is decidedly zootechnical in nature. A story of the controlled grafting of a population onto our planet.

By whom?

By the Elohim, by the Anunnaki.

In other parts of the world, these beings – individuals with identical roles and similar characteristics – are called the Devas, Viracochas, Netheru, Tuatha De Danaan.

In the Greco-Roman world: *Theoi*, Gods.

Elsewhere: the Shining Ones, the Sons of the Stars.

Who were they? Where did they come from?

“Let’s stick with the Bible,” Biglino recommends. “The Old Testament doesn’t tell us.”

The biblical text does at least allow us – in an extremely instructive way – to deduce the character of these beings, starting with the Bible’s principal Elohim: Yahweh.

Exterminate them all, even newborns: Word of Yahweh

“Oh God said to Abraham, ‘Kill me a son.’
Abe says, ‘Man, you must be puttin’ me on.’”

It was 1965 and these are the opening lines of “Highway 61 Revisited”, a song-symbol of Bob Dylan’s art and replete with biblical quotations.

In the text of the song, the dialogue is dramatic. Abraham resists the idea of killing Isaac, so God tells him what he should expect if he disobeys:

“God said, ‘You can do what you want, Abe, but
The next time you see me comin’, you better run.’”

The sacrifice of Isaac – thwarted at the last minute by an angel once the father had decided to slaughter his son – appears in chapter 22 of Genesis.

Isaac has his back pressed against a rock, with the blade of the knife already pointed at his throat. The son really is about to be killed and in an atrocious manner.

In his essay “Fear and Tremor”, published in 1843, the great Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard defines Abraham as a “hero of faith and a model of extraordinary Christianity.”

Bob Dylan, for his part, sees this “divine” injunction only as simple and brutal intimidation: either you decide to kill your son, or I will kill you.

Fans of Mafia movies – stories largely based on real events – might also have certain less-than-edifying episodes come to mind. Killers who, once arrested, confess that their “career” began precisely with this sort of monstrous crime: the killing of a friend or even a relative, to prove their absolute loyalty to the Boss.

It’s best to clear the field of any misunderstandings. It’s highly unlikely that anyone would see blasphemous intent on the part of someone horrified

by being expected to kill their own child. And frankly, with all due respect to Kierkegaard, how could anyone recognize a transcendent loving divinity, let alone a Christian one, in such a shocking, gory request?

“The answer, once more, is very simple,” says Mauro Biglino. “The Bible is not a religious text. That book, in reality, never talks about God.”

In the sense that it does not speak of the spiritual God whom faithful believers have been addressing for two thousand years.

Who does the Old Testament talk about, then?

Of Yahweh. Just one of the many Elohim mentioned in it, the one to whom were assigned the descendants of Jacob, son of that Isaac who was about to be sacrificed like a young goat.

And this is not an isolated incident. For a certain period, firstborns were meat for slaughter, again by order of the “boss”.

Horror? Yes, but biblical.

“I polluted them with their own offerings, making them sacrifice every first-born son,” admits Yahweh himself in the Book of Ezekiel.

He even admitted “throwing them into consternation, so that they would recognize that I am the Lord,” or the sovereign and undisputed commander.

In a word: ruthless. No regard for human life whatsoever. Massacre upon massacre ordered with inflexible brutality.

Well, yes: “Yahweh has always shown himself to be merciless towards the enemies of his people, the people of Israel.”

What was his purpose?

“Simply to conquer a territory to reign over.”

The truth, Biglino continues, is that the Bible is essentially a book about war. And it contains an awful lot of these kinds of events. The pattern is always the same. The “boss” gives orders, his subordinates carry them out. And they do this with no hesitation or reluctance. In fact, they kill with real zeal and enthusiasm.

“Let’s quote the Book of Joshua, for example. In chapter 10 we read that the Israelites carried out Yahweh’s orders with great satisfaction.”

In drawing up a sort of record of the battles he fought victoriously, Joshua lists many of the places he conquered.

“Joshua,” we read, “and all Israel with him, then turned back on Debir and attacked it. He took it and its king and all the places belonging to it; they put

them to the sword, and every living creature there they delivered over to the curse of destruction. He left no one alive.”

Then he passed on to Libnah and treated it in the same way. And so on. The list is very long, embarrassing. The warriors swarm in and create a bloodbath: men and women, children and the elderly. No one was spared.

“Thus Joshua subjugated the whole country: the highlands, the Negeb, the lowlands and watered foothills, and all their kings.”

What’s more, “He left not one survivor and put every living thing under the curse of destruction, as Yahweh, God of Israel, had commanded.”

By order of Yahweh, Biglino points out, the Israelites had no scruples whatsoever about massacring even the most peaceful of communities.

“In the Book of Judges, it says that when they reached Lais, they found a people who lived in peace. The inhabitants were harmless, not hostile, so they felt safe. Moreover, Lais was far from any city that might have helped them. And so, once they arrived, the members of the tribe of Dan put those peaceful people to the sword and burned the city down.”

Another gruesome story that highlights the brutality of the Elohim is found in chapter 31 of the Book of Numbers, which tells of the struggle for the extermination of the Midianites.

“Note here that the Midianites were direct descendants of Abraham, so very close relatives of the Israelites. Yet Yahweh’s orders were to annihilate them all.”

This time, that didn’t happen. In chapter 31 it says that Moses “was angry with the commanders of his army as they returned from that war expedition.”

Moses said to them, “You left all the women alive? Now kill every male among the children and every woman who has joined with a man.”

The order had to be reiterated: exterminate everyone.

And what about the girls?

“In that same war of extermination waged against the Midianites, narrated in chapter 31 of Numbers, it says that little girls were to be left alive.”

The little ones, Biglino explains, were part of the booty shared between the people and Yahweh.

“In this sharing of the spoils, Yahweh is entitled to 675 sheep, 72 oxen, 61 donkeys and 32 living people.”

It is easy to deduce who those “living people” actually were.

“Keeping in mind that the only people left alive by Moses’ orders were

young girls, we might well wonder: what possible use could Yahweh ever have for 32 girls? Shouldn't he be the spiritual and transcendent God, omniscient and omnipotent?"

These are difficult pages to swallow, undigestible verses that theology and liturgy are all too happy to overlook.

What are we supposed to think about a character who shares the booty with his warriors and keeps the girls for himself?

Things get even more complicated if we consider the attitude – certainly not a charitable one – he has towards childhood.

In the first period of the “reign” of Yahweh, there was in fact an ancient and aberrant custom, which our current morality can only define as abominable: the sacrificial killing of firstborn children.

At least poor Isaac (who was nearly killed by his father) was a grown man, as according to tradition he was well over thirty.

Bob Dylan comes back to mind here: if his “Highway 61” is a kind of contemporary dystopian hell, the choice to open that review of horrors with the scene of Abraham and Isaac seems to be sending a very clear message. It seems to be saying that things must have gone wrong for humanity right from the very beginning, and that it probably wasn't entirely our fault.

The slaughter of newborns is an insurmountable obstacle for common human conscience.

“In the Bible, Yahweh repeatedly says that firstborn children ‘belong’ to him, and at some point it is even said that firstborns had to be ransomed. They are even assigned a monetary value, and newborns had to be ransomed after 30 days.”

But the pecuniary ransom (which ultimately is blackmail: if you want to keep your son, you have to pay me) is the result of a later choice.

“In truth, in the early stages, firstborns were sacrificed to him, and this is clearly stated in Ezekiel 20:25.”

Give me your firstborn and I will burn them for you. Word for word.

“I myself shall give them bad decrees and laws that do not give life,” says Yahweh, explaining that he would ‘contaminate’ the parents with their offerings, ‘by making them sacrifice their firstborns.’”

The motive is clearly explained: “To throw them into consternation.” For the most atrocious of reasons, “so that they would recognize that I am the

Lord.”

These passages, Biglino observes with unusual detachment, tell the initial story of the relationship between Yahweh and his people.

It is the “boss” himself who admits that his people, in essence, “needed to be bent hard.”

In the hardest way imaginable, the most ferocious way possible.

“This practice continued for many centuries”, says Biglino. It must have been a kind of routine practice. King Josiah, in the seventh century BCE, finally stopped it, says the scholar. The sovereign “decided to enact religious reforms, attempting to put an end to this barbaric practice, replacing it with a ransom.”

So instead of burning the firstborn, they were “ransomed” by monetary payment made to the Temple, which was essentially the administrative center of the time.

“From that moment on, they also tried to make people forget the past. With Josiah’s reforms, they avoided remembering that, for centuries, firstborns had been killed and burned as a sacrifice to Yahweh.”

It is highly unlikely that the average reader has ever come across biblical passages like the ones cited above. It is usually other essential moments in the Bible that are recalled, ones much more suitable for theological interpretation.

The alleged creation of the universe, the expulsion of Adam and Eve, the story of Moses and the Exodus. Among the most popular ‘classics’ remain the Tower of Babel, the Great Flood and Noah’s Ark.

Mauro Biglino was curious about for those verses at a very young age. Over time, he deepened his knowledge about them.

The study of the Hebrew language is fundamental, allowing the reader to confront the text directly, without any mediation.

Granted, the Old Testament remains a collection of books with no certain sources. What’s more, it has been continuously reworked over centuries. It does, however, retain narrative integrity and underlying coherence.

Even the cruelties it contains, in clear consideration, are no different from other texts of the same period, or at any rate, ancient, recounting times when killing innocents in cold blood was the order of the day.

The Bible certainly has no monopoly on the practice of human sacrifice.

The difference, if any, is that it seems as though the Bible is the only one that isn't "allowed" to be itself: perhaps a historical photograph, no crueller than others.

A strange fate: it is still claimed that this book, while recounting extremely explicit factual events, actually means something else, crediting some sort of spiritual inspiration. And this is done without even knowing the real identity of the original authors.

"I say that the Bible is always worth reading. If, for just a moment, we set aside the idea that it's talking about a transcendent divinity, we can enjoy it for what it is. It tells us in detail how those people may have lived back then, and it reveals to us the very practical nature of the relationship between men and those figures that the Old Testament refers to as Elohim, the exact meaning of which no one in the world can claim to know."

Biglino sighs.

"Some of my detractors reproach me. According to them, I am engaging in a 'reading of the ignorant', of those who understand nothing. For them, I don't understand that the facts narrated are not to be taken literally. Yes, but which facts, exactly?"

In other words?

"Those who accuse me of lending weight to a literal reading are the same people who, when it suits them, validate verses like the ones that Genesis opens with. "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." In that case, the textual reading, albeit based on a wrong translation, is just fine for them. Does that seem right to you?"

In short: a literal reading of the Bible is fine in the (artificial) translation when we see the expression 'God', a being who performs great miracles, while a symbolic interpretation is promptly put forward as soon as the story becomes plainly explicit, revealing unacceptable barbaric violent acts, monstrously unjust by any measure.

Hence Mauro Biglino's great apprehension: "If I had to exalt and celebrate a divinity, could I really present it in such way?"

Butchery, massacres, babies killed and then literally roasted.

Those who deny any historical validity to the Bible inevitably have great difficulty explaining how the biblical authors could have invented so many atrocities to present their God.

"I have never said that a literal reading is the only one possible," clarifies

the translator. “But I have to note that it is the only one that is regularly avoided. In my opinion, it deserves at least equal status and should be considered on the same level as other interpretive readings of the Old Testament: theological, esoteric and symbolic, gematria-cabalistic. Fine, I have no objections. They are all legitimate. But shouldn’t we include a literal reading as well? It is the one we are duty-bound to start with: the actual text, word for word. For me, it is essentially about respecting the biblical authors, carefully reading what they have to say.”

The Psalms are a classic case of a merely partial reading.

More often than not, only parts of those texts are recited, with great devotion. Others are neglected because it’s impossible to see how they can conform to the theological notion of a benign divine being.

The Psalms, Biglino emphasizes, are always presented to us as songs of glory and thanksgiving, addressed to the one spiritual and transcendent God.

“In reality, they are something quite different. They are songs of way, hymns sung by the people to their leader, thanking him for the victory in battle.”

How can we discover this?

In the usual way: by reading the text.

“Reading some of the best-known Psalms, their true character is clearly understood.”

In Psalm 136, for example, we find the “eternal” love of “God”.

“And that is interpreted to mean that this love is for the whole of humanity.”

And this is not the case?

“Absolutely not. In reality, it is quite clear how this ‘God’s love’ was only for his people, Israel. And it was related to the violent actions that ‘God’ had taken, always in favor of his chosen people against other peoples.”

A merciless passage: “He struck Egypt’s firstborns - because his love is eternal.” He struck them “with a strong hand and an outstretched arm,” again “because his love is eternal.” Then “he threw the Pharaoh and his army into the sea, killed mighty kings and gave their land as an inheritance to his servant, Israel.” Every single event recalled is always accompanied by the same formula: “Because his love is eternal.”

Here, says Biglino, the real value of these “prayers” is clearly understood.

In other verses, there is even the exaltation of infanticide.

This is the case of Psalm 137, in which he addresses the “daughter of Babylon, doomed to destruction,” with these words: “Blessed is he who will repay you for what you did to us, blessed is he who will take your little ones and smash them against the rocks.”

Yet another sign of abomination: violence against little children, which evidently was commonplace, at least originally.

Mauro Biglino also cites Psalm 18.

It is one of the best-known Psalms because it contains the invocation to the Lord, to whom we turn, saying “I love you, Lord.”

Some intensely memorable devotional expressions are addressed to the presumed divinity: he is called “my strength, my rock, my fortress, my liberator.”

But this Psalm does not end there.

“Reading it in its entirety, once again, we understand its true nature.”

The following verses speak for themselves.

“I pursued my enemies and overtook them, and I did not return without annihilating them. I shot them down and they couldn’t get up, you girded me with strength for the battle.”

Again: “You have bent my adversaries under me, you have made my enemies turn their backs and I have exterminated those who hated me.”

The text has a frankness that cannot be ignored.

“May the God of my salvation be exalted, the God who granted me my vengeance and subdued the peoples under me.”

These examples, Biglino summarizes, reveal the purpose of these invocations and their concrete value. “These are songs of war that a victorious people addresses to their general in thanks.”

That general had to be Yahweh. “After all, the Bible defines him literally as ‘male warrior’.”

An inflexible commander, capable of the most extreme ferocity.

Moreover, he is meticulous in his commandments, even in peacetime.

He is also a lover of wine, expecting the equivalent of 3-5 liters a day. Wine, or more precisely “Shakhar”, roughly translatable as “intoxicating drink”.

“The Hebrew term indicates precisely the act of getting drunk and of saying nonsensical things.”

And that was not the only substance coveted by the El of the Jews.

According to the text, he was also literally crazy about another specialty: smoke. This was a very particular type of smoke, produced by burning the very tender fat that grows around the abdominal organs in newborn mammals.

Lambs, for example. But also babies.

Newborns.

“Divine” Butchery and Fake News: The Non-existent Red Sea of Exodus

“When speaking of sacrifices, the biblical God is always very precise. He provides very detailed practical instructions, partly because he wanted a very specific portion of the victims for himself.” In Leviticus 3, he specifies: “He will offer part of the communion sacrifice as food burnt for Yahweh: the fat covering the entrails, all the fat on the entrails, both kidneys, the fat on them and on the loins, the mass of fat which he will remove from the liver and kidneys.”

There are “culinary” instructions as well.

“The priests descended from Aaron will then burn this on the altar, in addition to the burnt offering, on the wood of the fire.”

There is even a direct explanation: “It is a food offering, an aroma pleasing to the Lord.” This Old Testament “Lord” is certainly a strange one, so passionate about such earthly aromas.

There had to be something sublime about those barbecues. Yes, but what?

Mauro Biglino began to ask himself this question many years ago, attracted as he was by the charm of those texts that, in some respects, might seem obscure at first sight.

Many doubts dissipated with the study of Hebrew, even before working as a translator for the Edizioni San Paolo.

A pleasing aroma, says Leviticus?

“In Hebrew, in fact, the word for ‘pleasing’ means ‘relaxing’ and ‘calming’. This is stated very explicitly in chapter 28 of the Book of Numbers. There, again referring to sacrifices, Yahweh clearly says that it must be a sacrifice consumed by fire. The aroma is sweet and pleasing to the Lord, to the point of ‘appeasing him’.”

The concept, Biglino observes, is repeated over and over in that chapter. The calming effect of that smoke on Yahweh is affirmed several times.

Any possible scientific explanations?

“The smoke produced by burnt fat contains some very particular molecules. Their structure is similar to that of the endorphins that our brain

produces when it is under stress and needs to calm down.”

So Yahweh was nervous?

Did he really need to “calm down” every day?

He wasn't the only one, explains the scholar. “This taste for smoke is found in many other stories of ancient peoples, stories that speak of the sacrifices they made to their divinities. The Sumerians, for example, tell us that after the flood, their Noah – called Utnapishtim or Ziusudra – offered a great sacrifice of animals to the divinities who had come there.”

That's precisely what the Sumerian-Akkadian text says: the deities rushed over, “attracted by the smoke like flies to flesh.”

Apparently, this habit characterized all the gods of the time.

“The same thing is highlighted in stories relating to the Greek gods, for whom wholesale slaughters were celebrated. And also in the Homeric poems: how the part of the animal that was burned was to be prepared is described in great detail, in order to produce that famous smoke so pleasing to the deities. And that was a specific task to be carried out by men alone: the gods demanded it.”

The whole Mediterranean, and even beyond, smelled of such strange cookouts.

“The Romans gods also had this same requirement, as did the Celtic ones. Historians like Strabo tell us that the Celts at times burned their prisoners alive, singing and dancing so as not to hear their screams.”

Not exactly “Celtic music.”

“Historians also tell us that the Celts did so because it was a clear requirement, formally expressed by their divinities.”

Meaning: “This was no barbaric act accomplished for their own pleasure. It was the gods who demanded that the hostages be burned alive.”

It is very difficult for liturgical ceremonials to dwell on Yahweh's “rotisseries”, which for a certain time also included newborns and was only later limited to mutton. After having ascertained the obedience of his subjects, the “boss” accepted only young lambs, leaving human babies alone.

None of this was much different from the habits of his “colleagues”. It appears that all those individuals, with those untranslatable names, really needed that smoke.

We can only speculate on the real reason for this. Could those molecules

have compensated for their physiology, perhaps one not suited to terrestrial conditions?

This is an idea that will resonate with the followers of the “ancient aliens” theory, those convinced of the extraterrestrial origins of that group of rulers.

Mauro Biglino prefers to remain silent on that topic.

We don’t have that information, he says. “The Bible does not explain where those lords came from.”

If nothing else, it does go into great detail – especially in Yahweh’s case – about their daily needs, personal and other. They speak with extreme precision of stringent rules to be followed with the utmost discipline, in order to regulate social life.

“In the Christian religion it is taught that God gave 10 commandments: in reality, the precepts that Yahweh gave to his people are 613. And they are all precepts related to the need for creating a people, for unifying it with rules and, especially in the initial phase, for rendering the coexistence of those people livable and orderly, forced as they were to live in the uncomfortable desert of Exodus.

A great many of those 613 precepts are hygienic and sanitary in nature. “The so-called biblical God was very careful keep his people from being exterminated by diseases, epidemics, and so on.”

Several other laws were aimed at averting any possibility of unrest or internal conflicts. Quarrelling among neighbors was strictly forbidden. The risk of violence had to be completely avoided. There would have been real trouble if the camp suddenly fell into chaos over a dispute over money, food or women.

“The same Commandments that were later used by the Church,” continues Biglino, “relate to prohibitions that had to be observed this particular people, though they did not apply to relations with others.”

This is a key passage. The Mosaic norms were not extended to all humanity. They were valid only for the members of that particular group.

“The prohibition of killing and stealing, along with the prohibition of taking other people’s animals or women, served the purpose of avoiding internal feuds. At the same time, however, the whole Bible clearly tells us what could and should be done with goods taken from others in the course of their battles of conquest.”

Within these precepts, observes the scholar, there are laws of clear racial

connotation. “It was forbidden to have relations with women belonging to other tribes, even if these other peoples – such as the Moabites, Ammonites, Amalekites, Midianites – all belonged to the family of Abraham.”

The prohibition against these actions (do not steal, do not kill) was related to those whom the Bible defines as “your neighbor”.

“This concept has then been theologically enlarged to encompass ‘others’, understood as the whole of humanity.”

This is a mistake. “In reality, the term in Hebrew does not have that meaning. It clearly indicates ‘your neighbor’, someone belonging to the same clan, tribal or familial.”

In short: no particular “divine” rule assigned to the human race.

More prosaically, those were just a series of instructions on how to behave, given to that small group of people struggling with the exodus from Egypt.

“It was within these limited groups that those acts were not to be committed. With others, however, extermination and theft were in fact ordered by Yahweh himself.”

Seen from this closer look at the text, it is obvious that the Bible “sounds” completely different from how it is regularly recounted. It often ends up just being summed up in a rather vague way for an audience of believers who rarely consult it.

If Hebrew allows us to avoid many interpretative misunderstandings, the same reading in modern languages still allows a clear understanding of what those verses are talking about.

In any case, there’s nothing about any notion of spiritual elevation towards some form of transcendence.

Merciless descriptions of countless atrocities abound, though, and great attention is paid to the practical rules to be followed in daily life.

This detailed system of norms, purely social in nature, emerges precisely in the Book of Exodus.

It is the story of an eastward migration from the lands of the Nile to those of the Jordan. Traditionally, it is presented to us as an adventurous, courageous and dangerous escape, even featuring the spectacular “miracle” of the crossing of the Red Sea.

Mauro Biglino shakes his head. It’s all false, all made up.

“But it’s not me saying that, it’s the Bible itself.”

Going through Biglino's essays feels like standing witness to a relentless demolition operation. Not of the Bible, but rather of the "unfaithful" narrative that has been deformed by theology.

Raise your hand all those who have never stood in awe before iconographic images celebrating the prodigious event of the Red Sea: waves that rise and separate, allowing the people being chased by the ferocious Egyptian pharaoh to pass unharmed.

A very famous representation of this is the magnificent painting, perhaps the work of Ghirlandaio, embellishing the Sistine Chapel itself.

What a shame, Biglino smiles, that the Bible never talks about the Red Sea.

I beg your pardon?

"It's true. The Old Testament never mentions the Red Sea. As for that famous passage in Exodus, it only mentions a 'sea of reeds'."

"Yam-Suf", to be specific: a marshy reedbed.

In short, no special effects.

"Basically, the Israelites crossed a reedbed where, when a certain wind expressly mentioned in the Bible blew all night, a shoal opened, making the crossing possible."

In other words, a simple ford.

"Yes. That particular draft of air could allow them to cross the area before the waters returned to cover it, once the effect of the wind ceased."

Disappointing?

Maybe, but that is what the Bible actually talks about.

"That's it. So the crossing had no hint of the spectacular that theological interpretation has always attributed to it."

To tell the truth, Hollywood has certainly not hesitated to emphasize and that enormous event, engraving it on our collective imagination.

Exodus: those wizards at DreamWorks made a masterpiece of animated cinema out of it in 1998 with *The Prince of Egypt*. But the forefather of this dramatization was a film that made history: *The Ten Commandments*, made by the legendary Cecil B. DeMille.

It was long-ago 1956. Playing Moses in the Paramount blockbuster was superstar Charlton Heston, the prototype of the Hero.

But who was the real Moses?

“To begin with, it is difficult to talk about a ‘real Moses’,” says Biglino. “The figure of Moses, like many other biblical figures, is very controversial. And we can only ‘pretend’ that he existed.”

Here we go again. So after the Red Sea, never mentioned, now Moses “disappears” as well?

Not exactly, no.

In the Bible – unlike the sea that separates Egypt from the Arabian Peninsula – Moses does in fact appear, as a character, at least. It is his historicity that is elusive.

“If we eliminate this figure, we must consequently eliminate all the subsequent history, because Moses was the true founder of the Israelite people as we know it.”

So who could he have been?

“If he existed, he must have been an Egyptian. The Bible itself says so. And he clearly must have been some kind of military commander. His knowledge of the territory in all its peculiarities made him particularly useful for Yahweh, who used him as his leader on the field and as his intermediary with his people”.

But was he really on the run from Egypt, or had this exodus been agreed upon with the Egyptians?

“The Bible tells us that Moses fled from Egypt and freed his people from slavery. In reality, though, many extra-biblical Jewish stories tell us that it was never a question of real slavery, considering also that their departure from Egypt took place in a very peculiar way and with some strange characteristics, to say the least.”

That people, Biglino observes, abandoned the Egyptian territories, taking with them many animals, and above all, great quantities of precious metals, including gold. “This wouldn’t have been possible if they had been slaves.”

It also seems that we can’t exclude the possibility that the Egyptian army greatly facilitated the departure of Moses and his men.

“Jewish tales even say that the pharaoh would have followed them in the first part of their journey; not to ‘pursue’ them, but to make sure they would not turn around and come back.”

And not only that: “Moses himself brought with him a group of armed men, the Levi tribe, which he needed to quell any possible revolt and to prevent his people from returning to their previous condition.”

Is that plausible?

“The Bible does, in fact, talk about many complaints from the Jewish people. Basically, they were saying that they were better off in Egypt because they had food and lived in peace.”

So why did they ever leave Egypt?

“This makes us think that Yahweh and Moses acted with force, seeking to convince the people. They may have told them that they were leading them to a much better place.”

One wonders who those strange migrants really were.

“Speaking of the Jewish people in general terms, we have to say that those who were in Egypt were only the descendants of Jacob, the Israelites.”

Mauro Biglino is clear about the demographic geography of the Jewish galaxy of that time: of course not all of the people of the Book had moved to Egypt.

“Other descendants of Abraham’s family lived in the land of Canaan, such as the descendants of Hagar or the descendants of Lot, Abraham’s grandson. They lived in the land where Moses and Yahweh intended to bring the descendants of Jacob, later renamed Israel.”

They were certainly not alone on the banks of the Jordan.

“Living in Canaan were the Amalekites, the Moabites and the Ammonites, who belonged to the same family of origin as Abraham, so they were Jewish.”

And how many “migrants” from Egypt could there have been?

“Regarding the number of those who had escaped from Egypt, the Bible tells us there were 600,000, counting only men of fighting age. To these we must add children, women and the elderly. The Bible also tells us that among the exiled were various peoples, evidently other subjects, ones not belonging to the tribes of Israel, who joined this great exodus from Egypt.”

Parenthetical question: how far did Egyptian rule extend?

“Precisely. We’ve really got to add that at the time, the land of Canaan itself was under Egyptian control. So it just seems improper to say that the people of Moses ‘fled Egypt’ because, in reality, they lived in territories ruled by the pharaoh.”

First the Red Sea and Moses, now the exodus itself seems to be somewhat debunked. Are we sure that this was nothing more than a very limited transfer

of people to a specific and relatively small place, without anything particularly heroic about it?

With a script revised and corrected by Biglino in hand, it is unlikely that Charlton Heston would have accepted the role of Moses.

And this is nothing. We must not forget the initial act of the exodus, the triggering event. It was a “magical” event, like the crossing of the Red Sea: the famous “plagues of Egypt”.

A series of terrible tragedies.

The transmutation of water into blood, the invasion of frogs from the waterways. Then the mosquitoes, the flies, the pestilence of the livestock, and the appearance of ulcers on humans and animals.

A dramatic crescendo: rain of fire and ice, the swarm of locusts, darkness. And finally, the death of all firstborn males (always very at risk in the Bible).

“The origin of the plagues of Egypt is theologically traced back to Yahweh, to his will to act on the pharaoh and convince him to free his people. But in reality, those plagues can be ascribed to a succession of natural events, events originating from an earthquake that gave rise to the consequent and coherent progression of all these occurrences.”

A very fascinating hypothesis.

In the 1980s, Biglino recalls, essentially the same “incidents” occurred in Cameroon, on Lake Nyos.

In order: an earthquake released iron ore into the lake, which reddened the waters. “The oxidation then caused the death of the fish and the escape of the frogs, which then invaded the surrounding area.”

A chain of events just like the biblical ones.

“The death of the fish and their consequent putrefaction generated organisms, insects and microorganisms that flourish where there are rotting cadavers. These caused sores and other types of pathologies among the inhabitants of the area.”

And what about the wave of death of firstborn children?

“This one in the Bible could be explained by events that occurred in Africa in the 1980s. That very same seismic movement generated a mixture of gases that also contained carbon monoxide. That deadly gas came out of the water, invading the surrounding area. Being heavier than air, the mixture of gasses (about a meter thick) killed many of the people living on the shores of the lake, who slept on the ground at night. The gas spared those who slept on

higher beds. If we think that firstborns in Egypt slept in privileged positions, on cots or cribs not too high from ground level, a few dozen centimeters at best, we can imagine how the selective death of the firstborns of that part of the Nile could have occurred. And the phenomena described by the Bible did not even affect the entire Nile River, but only one or more channels in the delta, because, in fact, the Bible speaks of a channel.”

So nothing to do with any “divine” intervention, not even for the mythical “plagues of Egypt”.

Such conclusions would probably have discouraged even the formidable writers at Paramount.

What “wrath of God” can we speak of, if it was earthquakes that colored the waters of the lakes blood-red, initiating a dramatic chain of events, all of them strictly natural?

It is quite possible that certain stories simply traveled long distances, and quite probable that they were then incorporated into various local tales, duly enhanced to justify a “supernatural” explanation and intervention.

Very little remains of Exodus after Biglino’s demolition work. Or rather, after the demystification of those tales that, Bible at hand, now seem to be just fables, albeit beautiful ones.

Magical thinking: the essence of the “miracle”. Fantasy fiction? Not the biblical story, which is always explainable. It’s rather the other interpretation that gives way, the theological narrative of a divinity endowed with superpowers, but ultimately incongruent because he is heartless and ever ready for a massacre.

So we are tearing Exodus apart?

No, quite the contrary. We are sweeping away the legend and sticking to the actual text, especially where it seems to have been regularly misrepresented.

Do you remember the story of the Golden Calf?

The construction of that idol is generally interpreted as being an affront to monotheism.

“That’s interesting. Where is this biblical monotheism? At best we can speak of henotheism, or choosing a particular divinity amongst many. Paul of Tarsus himself was aware of this much later. ‘There are many *Theoi* (Gods),’ he writes.”

So Saint Paul – the co-founder of Christianity – tells us, in writing, that

there are numerous divinities.

“Many years before him, Solomon himself – celebrated in the Bible as the wisest of kings – at one point even erected various altars in honor of Elohim other than Yahweh.”

So there is nothing so unusual, it would seem, that at a given point – again in the Exodus story – the Golden Calf makes an appearance.

“No, not at all. It’s not such an anomalous event.”

The infamous event takes place while Moses is on the mountain for one of his usual meetings with Yahweh. He stays there for a long time, and nothing is heard from him.

“The people encamped on the plain below start to fear that something might have happened to Moses so, wanting to be guided by an Elohim all the same, they asked Aaron to make a simulacrum, reproducing the image of one of the many they had known in Egypt.”

Aaron, formally the high priest, does not repulse this request. In fact, he immediately agreed to it, asking the people for the gold needed to make the statue of a calf.

“Let’s remember that it was customary in Egypt to represent divinities in animal form, or in any case with masks that resembled animals.”

The first oddity, Biglino points out, is precisely Aaron’s behavior in this circumstance. He blatantly betrays his Elohim yet he goes completely unpunished.

Strange, isn’t it?

“When Moses finally comes down from the mountain, he is very angry towards his people, even breaking the Tablets of the Law.”

This is yet another oddity. “Here again we have behavior that is not explainable, unless we assume that Moses knew he could do that without facing any consequences and, above all, was safe in the knowledge that he would be able to get more.”

The Bible later tells us that the calf was melted down. Then Moses made his people drink the gold dust dissolved in water.

“In reality, this whole affair could have been engineered to flush out any potential rebels, to identify them and then kill them. And this is, in fact, exactly what happened immediately afterwards.”

So this punishment was not at all religious in nature, for having offended the group’s alleged monotheism. “It was most probably a sort of police

operation, a preventive measure taken to pre-empt a possible rebellion of those who wanted to turn back.”

The nostalgia of his people for the comfortable life they had left behind in Egypt was, we can well imagine, Moses’ greatest fear.

To root it out, Moses had to be tough.

And if that had not been enough, would Yahweh have been ready to intervene directly? According to current translations, the Exodus also sings “the glory” of this great leader. Literally, the glory of God.

Biglino wonders which God, and what glory, we are talking about.

“Honestly, the Exodus only mentions the Kavod, a dangerous roaring aircraft.

Some kind of warplane?

Who knows? Charlton Heston may have liked the idea.

The Glory of God and Other Flying Machines

The only thing we can do is hold on tight to the magic carpet that Mauro Biglino is taking us on.

Reckless? Demented? Out of his mind?

Many authoritative Jewish exegetes do not think so. Nor did the equally authoritative theologians who, in 2016, agreed to examine his translations with him.

The result? Nothing that could undermine his deductive system based on a literal reading of the Old Testament.

“If there were any certainty of God, God would not be,” philosophizes the Catholic theologian Ermis Segatti.

The distinguished Waldensian biblical scholar Daniele Garrone is even more explicit. If we want to, he says, we can think that the word of God does resound in those pages after all.

But how can this be? Hasn't tradition been telling us for centuries that the Bible was inspired directly by God, through Moses?

Not at all.

“Basically, if we really want to,” at most we can think of a “word” that has “resonated”.

And do we want that?

The answer, perhaps, lies in that “if”. First of all, let's keep an open mind.

An open mind, free to think what we like, without presuming to impose anything on anyone. Especially when, after a rigorous examination of the text, we can still think (again, “only if we want to”) that that ineffable word still resounds.

We'll be flying on the wings both of today's language and Hebrew verses of the past. What effect does this have?

If anyone can answer that question, it's Biglino. He was the first one to realize, at a certain point in his life, that he had ended up on that very magic carpet.

The more he read, the more he flew. From one discovery to the next.

“That’s all I have ever done. Report what it seems that I’m reading in the Bible. And then, to be clear, everyone is free to do whatever they want with that, either accepting my observations as good ones or throwing them away.”

The impact of this “flight”, which has been available to the public for ten years now, is obvious. Perched on that carpet, one ends up with a panoramic view from above. And the spectacle can destabilize even the most deeply rooted beliefs.

Simply put, we thought we were living with our feet on the ground, and now this guy comes along to tell us that we’re not? Two thousand years of tradition only to learn that so many certainties were just cliches, the result of misunderstandings and misinterpretations, gross oversights or even malicious manipulations?

“Hold on: I have not ‘discovered’ anything. Shall we try to truly read the Bible?”

One thing can be said for certain: there are no flying carpets in the Old Testament.

And yet the “air traffic” on those pages seems to be quite intense.

This is confirmed by the recurring appearance of flying entities, such as the one that appears in the Exodus: the Kavod.

It all begins with Moses, Biglino starts.

The leader of the people leaving Egypt “felt like he needed to meet the Elohim who had contacted him. Who was he really?”

Incidentally, “Moses also wanted to make sure that he could deliver on his promises.”

And to that end, after having asked him about his name, Moses expressed a specific wish: he needed to see his Kavod.

“The term is theologically translated as “glory”, meaning a spiritual attribute of God, the glory of the Lord.”

In truth, the scholar specifies, this word “stands for something heavy and powerful.”

The whole of the biblical context, Biglino adds, “allows us to understand how, in fact, this was a means used by Yahweh to both move and fight.”

In other words, a vehicle capable of transforming itself into some sort of aeronautical weapon if necessary.

“In the case of the story of Moses, Yahweh agrees to comply with his

request to see his Kavod. This detail already shows us that the so-called ‘glory of God’ did not always accompany ‘God’ because by looking at him, Moses didn’t see it, so he had to ask him to show it to him.”

Biglino insists on this point. In the Bible, it may be the context itself that dispels any possible misunderstandings lurking in the polysemy, the several meanings that a single word can have.

“The actual facts of the event narrated in Exodus, the so-called biblical God tells Moses to be ready for the next day. He also gives him a precise order: Moses mustn’t look at the front part of the ‘glory’ as it passes over the mountain. He will have to ‘hiding behind the rocks’, looking at it from the back, otherwise he will die.”

Interesting, isn’t it?

“This tells us quite clearly that the ‘glory’ was to something that ‘passed by’ and that couldn’t be observed from the front because it was lethal. But if an observer took shelter behind rocks, he would live.”

Here’s another potentially embarrassing deduction we can make from the text. “The God of the Exodus seems to be unable to control the effects of his ‘glory’, while simple rocks could do the trick. So it is quite obvious that, whatever this was, it was something very physical and equally dangerous.”

An anomalous and isolated apparition?

On the contrary. “This account is perfectly consistent with other biblical tales that mention the Kavod. In Ezekiel, for example, when it says that, ‘rising from the ground’, the Kavod ‘makes a great noise.’

Some ante-litteram flying machines?

Or perhaps sophisticated technological devices, such as the famous Ark of the Covenant?

“Reading the Bible, one can concretely hypothesize that the Ark was an instrument capable of producing, condensing and conserving energy.”

Seriously?

“Allow me to point out that the instrument in question could only be used by specialized, well-trained and even appropriately dressed personnel.”

So you are saying that it was it something to be handled with care, exactly like in the movie *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, the Indiana Jones saga blockbuster?

Biglino, as usual, sticks exclusively to the biblical text.

“Those handling the Ark,” he says, “had to wear special clothing, creating

a sort of ‘Faraday cage’, and when someone inadvertently touched the Ark he was immediately killed, struck by an electromagnetic shock.”

By the way, at the end of 2015 some bizarre rumors were circulating following a terrifying massacre of Muslim pilgrims to Mecca. It was hypothesized that, beneath the Muslim shrine, a strange golden chest called the “Ark of Gabriel” had been carelessly tampered with.

According to tradition, it was given directly to Muhammad. Centuries later, the “instructions for use” found their way to Constantinople. During the Crusades, the scrolls were put into a safe secret place in the custody of the Orthodox Church, to then end up in Moscow.

One wonders if this is why in 2015, on the eve of the Russian military campaign against ISIS in Syria, the Saudi authorities requested Russian intervention. Only the “instructions” preserved by Patriarch Kirill would have been able to manage the Ark if it were to go berserk.

More unverifiable reports followed, according to which the Ark of Gabriel was then taken by special units of the Kremlin and ultimately “buried” in a remote Russian base in Antarctica.

All just fantasies?

The only certainty remains an official communication dispatch sent by the Russian defense ministry. An oceanographic vessel, escorted by a battleship, docked in Jeddah in Saudi Arabia to collect a precious “Islamic religious artefact”.

At first glance, the congruence of this narrative might elude us. Was it really an ancient scroll passed down hand-to-hand over the centuries – from a mosque in Istanbul to an Orthodox monastery, then finally Moscow – that connected Russia and Saudi Arabia, uniting them on a (very cinematic) mission to “defuse” some kind of mysterious energy weapon dating back to the time of Mohammed, then buried forever under the Antarctic ice?

In the days following these events, fans of this theory gleefully disseminated a rather particular photo on the internet, immortalizing Patriarch Kirill posing among penguins.

The official reason for such an unusual trip? The blessing and consecration of a small church built on a remote Russian military base on the Antarctic continent.

This tale of the Russians saving the poor Saudis from an anomalous device that had gone haywire, one mistakenly thought to be a simple religious

artefact... Was it all just a bit of fabulous fun with silly conspiracy theory?

Better to withhold judgment for lack of confirmation.

In any case, for Mauro Biglino there is already enough information concerning the other Ark, the first one, the one in the Bible.

“What is certain is that it was also used as a weapon,” the scholar emphasizes. “And that, when taken to war, the Israeli army had to keep a distance of 2000 cubits, about one kilometer.”

A precautionary measure, apparently.

“Ark was used in the course of the siege of the city of Jericho as well, demolishing its walls. An episode mentioned in the Book of Joshua.”

Where did this strange contraption come from?

“Its construction is described to us in chapters 25 and 37 of Exodus, telling how it was coated internally and externally with gold, with acacia wood inside (which evidently served as a insulation).”

This Ark wasn't messing around.

“Its deadly power is described in the Second Book of Samuel, chapter 6. While the Ark was being transported to Jerusalem, one of its keepers, Uzza, inadvertently touched it to keep it from falling from the chariot. He died instantly, electrocuted.”

The First Book of Samuel “talks about when the Ark was captured by the Philistines following a battle against Israel. Immediately afterwards, a plague broke out among the Philistines.” As a result of that, they decided to return the Ark, since they clearly did not know how to use it and did not know it how it worked.”

The Ark was also sealed by a lid “with two figures called Cherubim positioned on top of it. Each of the Cherubim had two side panels through which Moses was able to hear the voice of Yahweh when he spoke to him from a distance, as described in chapter 25 of Exodus.”

But wasn't the Ark just supposed to be a symbol, representing the spiritual alliance between a people and their deity?”

Yes, of course, in religious tradition.

In the Bible, however – Exodus, Samuel, Joshua – the Ark is appears in disconcerting concrete reality.

Once again, basing our consideration on the literal text and on an examination of the context can take us far.

This is Mauro Biglino's magic carpet effect.

From up there, we discover the possible "alternative" identities of various presences, traditionally considered as metaphysical in nature.

The Ark and the Cherubim, the Seraphim and the Ruach.

And, naturally, the Glory of the Exodus: the Kavod.

"Let me repeat that the Hebrew word *Kavod* is normally translated as 'glory', but in reality it refers to a heavy powerful object."

Theoretically, the expansion of the meaning of "glory", Biglino argues, can sometimes be justified. "But in reality," he adds, "nearly the entire biblical text leads us to think of the Kavod as the device used by Yahweh both to get around and to fight."

The scholar insists on that very eloquent episode in which the Kavod is seen by Moses, who "needs proof that Yahweh is actually able to keep his promises and lead the people of Israel in the conquest of the Promised Land."

So this is a kind of demonstration, one accepted by Yahweh with no hesitation at all.

"Let's also keep in mind that the Book of Ezekiel, in chapters 10 and 11, speaks clearly about what the Kavod does. It says that it rises from the ground, it moves and it lands. And when it takes off, it makes a loud noise."

The Ruach is also mentioned often in the Bible. What is it?

"It's a term that translates as 'spirit' but it actually means something more like 'a mass of air in movement'. Or 'something that produces wind when it moves'."

More or less like the Kavod?

"The Ruach seems to be much bigger, so a means of transportation of greater dimensions. The Kavod, on the other hand, appears to be the specific instrument of the God of the Israelites."

Where exactly does the Ruach first appear?

"At the very beginning. In the second verse of Genesis, it is described as 'hovering' on the surface of the waters. The verb in the Bible indicates the hovering typical of birds of prey, which allow themselves to be carried by the wind without moving their wings."

Other verses are even more explicit than that.

"It is also described in the Book of Ezekiel, where it is clearly stated that the Ruach travels in the heavens and that it comes from a precise direction. If

it were really referring to the ‘spirit of God’, this precise geographical location would not be appropriate, nor would such a precise description of its movements.”

And then there are the Cherubim and the Seraphim.

Little angels?

Not exactly.

“In the Bible we seem to encounter two types of Cherubim. The first kind is the one described as present on top of the Ark of the Covenant, constituting some sort of radio communication device.”

The Hebrew root from which the term “Keruvim” derives is very telling, says the translator, as it stands for “the act of covering”. This would explain both the function of the first type of Cherubim – those on top of the Ark – as well as the following function: “Not only were the Cherubim not angels, they were not even individuals in flesh and blood. It turns out, in fact, that they are machines. In this case, flying machines.”

Like the Ruach and the Kavod, just smaller?

“Exactly. Single-seat flying machines that Yahweh straddled, seated as on horseback. Using one of these Cherubim, Yahweh even goes to battle, taking David away, saving him from certain death, as narrated in chapter 22 of the Second Book of Samuel.”

As for the Seraphim, Biglino adds, the term derives from the Hebrew root indicating “the act of burning”.

“In fact, they are described as a category of angels who were particularly close to God, inside his dwelling.”

Here are some further deductions. “If we combine the concept of burning, thus producing heat and light, with the fact that they were in the dwelling-place of God, and ‘making a continuous deafening noise’ at that, we can imagine that they were systems for producing energy, both thermal and luminous.”

An announcement to the passengers: as you will have gathered, we are still on the magic carpet.

Onboard, Commander Mauro Biglino is on a roll with his explanations.

Of course, he never parts with the book he holds in his hand, the Bible, which he quotes practically from memory. Occasionally, though, he also draws from other volumes in his library.

Many of those texts mention phenomena similar to those described in the Old Testament.

Phenomena, and objects as well.

“Celestial chariots”, to be precise.

“Well, yes. The ‘celestial chariots’ are ubiquitous in the so-called myths, which are part of the heritage of peoples from every continent on Earth. The Greeks talk about them constantly, as do the Romans. Tacitus, for example, mentions the heavenly armies that appeared in the sky above Jerusalem in 70 CE. There are also references to flying objects in the works of Julius Obsequens. And besides the Bible, obviously, Hindu religious texts speak – and in great detail – of ‘celestial chariots’.

According to scholar Professor Luigi Moraldi, the apocryphal texts of the Old Testament speak of “at least 23 different types of celestial chariots.”

The apparitions in the skies of Jerusalem, Biglino recalls, are also cited by the historian Josephus. “He speaks of them as events that had many witnesses, so they are absolutely credible.”

Today we would likely call those lights by a very well-known name: Unidentified Flying Objects.

In the fall of 2019, the US Navy renamed them UAP, Unidentified Aerial Phenomena.

This admission by the American military was of historical importance, one that somewhat validates those ancient reports dating back thousands of years ago.

Were Tacitus, Josephus and company all ante-litteram UFO believers?

“I am not directly concerned with Ufology,” says Biglino. “However, reading the ancient texts and making comparisons between what I read in the Bible and what we read in many other texts, from all the continents of the Earth, it has become easy for me to hypothesize that the Elohim, corresponding to the Sumer-Akkadian Anunna or Anunnaki, may belong to a race, or in any case to a group of individuals coming from places other than planet Earth.”

The Alien God of the Bible is in fact one of the most striking texts that Biglino has had published.

But some clarification is called for. “I use the term ‘alien’ in a philologically neutral way, meaning an individual who is ‘different, distinct, separate’ from us, but not necessarily extraterrestrial.”

This is, of course, a legitimate hypothesis, such as the one regarding the presence, since the dawn of time, of an ancient terrestrial or ex-terrestrial civilization, far superior to ours.

Biglino, as usual, prefers to stick to precise references.

“The traditions of other continents, and especially the Hindu religion, speak of the Children of the Stars as accepted fact. And the Sumerians, just like the Hindu religion, tell us about the clashes between those beings, of battles fought up in the air and of flying objects crisscrossing the planet’s skies.”

Arriving at certain conclusions is, for the scholar, all but inevitable.

“Since the biblical Elohim substantially correspond to the Sumerian *Anunna* and the Indian *Devas*,” he explains, “it was not difficult for me to formulate this hypothesis”.

Among other things, Biglino also noted the substantial correspondence between the biblical Elohim and the so-called Greek *Theoi*.

“Even these, who were called gods, had knowledge and technology superior to that of the men they ruled over.”

At a certain point the evidence seems preponderant.

“The presence of flying objects is emphasized in all the tales of the Sumerians, the Indians, Chinese, Greeks and the inhabitants of the American continent, both in the North and the South.”

For Biglino the key point is this: “In the context of my work, it is not essential to establish whether the Elohim were extraterrestrials or not. The important thing is to understand that when the Bible speaks of Elohim, it isn’t speaking about God. It’s speaking about individuals in flesh and blood, who were endowed with knowledge and technologies far superior to those of the primitive men they had to deal with.”

After all, UFO simply means unidentified flying object – aircraft of uncertain identity.

Science fiction knows something about them, but unlike scientists, it has taken a good deal of narrative license, openly imagining little green men with antennas and extraterrestrial spaceships.

That said, certain works of fiction may contain some elements of truth.

“Science-fiction books and films,” Biglino admits, “are very often communication tools we use to predict a future that, in fact, already exists. Or

they pass on accurate information but in fantastic form, in a way that people can hear it without being frightened by it.”

It’s a fact: “The early episodes of *Star Trek* already had all the technologies we use today. So what was once just science-fiction has become technological reality for everyday use.”

Other possible clues come from examining so-called superhero comic books and movies.

“The character of Superman was invented by two Jewish men, Jerry Siegel and Joe Shuster, who gave him all the characteristics typical of the biblical Elohim. Originally, Superman was called Kal-El, which means ‘El the swift and fast’. The hero comes from a fictional planet called Krypton, which means ‘unknown’. Curious fact: the place of origin of the Elohim is not known either”.

The similarities do not end there.

“Kal-El, or Superman, is stronger than men but he is just as mortal as we are. This aspect is reiterated in the Bible as well. The Psalms speak of the mortality of the Elohim, who are very long-lived but certainly not ‘eternal’. The strange thing is that two authors of Jewish origin chose the characteristics of their presumed God to invent a comic book superhero, destined for a vast audience.”

Coded messages, perhaps, such as those of science fiction?

Could the true story of Superman lead us to speculate that those figures mentioned in the Bible were really ancient “superheroes”?

Characters, according to Biglino’s textual reading, who were able to handle complex, even dangerous, energy equipment, and to fly away on roaring aircraft. Were they even capable of unleashing weapons worthy of science-fiction?

We can discover this if we are ready to let ourselves be transported by our famous magic carpet all the way down to the shores of the Dead Sea, twenty kilometers from Jerusalem.

This stretch of water on the border with Jordan was the location of the so-called Pentapolis, made up of five coastal towns.

The names Adma, Zoar and Zeboim probably don’t mean anything to most readers.

Everyone, though, knows the story of the other two cities, Sodom and

Gomorrah.

Or at least, they *think* they know it.

“According to doctrinal, theological tradition, the biblical cities of Sodom and Gomorrah were destroyed because of their inhabitants’ sexual perversion.”

That’s right. That’s what’s been handed down to us.

Here’s the first problem with that: “This in itself is inexplicable. The destruction would, in fact, have necessarily involved all the inhabitants indiscriminately.”

This is not justice. “For every one person guilty of sexual perversion, four or five innocent people, plus all the animals, would have paid the price.”

In reality, Biglino points out, it is the Bible itself that recalls that those cities were destroyed because they no longer accepted Yahweh’s laws.

“So, in fact, they had decided to change alliance during the wars fought between the various factions of Elohim.”

The Elohim: those hypothetical superheroes, with their ultra-advanced weapons.

“The weapons used in this case had consequences that the Bible itself describes. Centuries later – and still now, two millennia after the event – the Bible tells us that that land was still arid and could not be cultivated. This gives us an idea of what sort of weaponry might actually have been used in that territory.”

Tabula rasa: complete devastation.

“And we know all too well what sort of weapons produce those effects...”

Of course, Hiroshima and Nagasaki come immediately to mind.

“The Sumerian and Akkadian tales, which date back even earlier, tell us about the very same event, but in greater detail.”

The source is the Saga of Erra: “There it is told that five different weapons, launched from the sky, were used on each of the five cities that were to be destroyed. And again Erra, along with other Sumerian-Akkadian stories, also tells us about the effects of what is called the ‘evil wind’, which killed men at a great distance, even kilometers away, with consequences typical of atomic bombs.”

The infamous nuclear fall-out.

“Hair fell out and lungs burned. People literally dissolved into thin air.”

Mauro Biglino was deeply impressed by those stories, finding them

extremely explicit and too precise to be the result of mere literary fiction

“That ‘evil wind’,” he says, “risked killing the very Elohim who had decided to use those weapons and who were located in Mesopotamia.”

There’s no point in mincing words: we are talking about something that actually took place.

“That event is placed around 2000 BCE, de facto representing the end of the Sumerian civilization.”

The Great Scam: A long Tradition of Nonsense

In the exemplary 1963 novel *The Council of Egypt*, by Italian writer Leonardo Sciascia, who is also greatly admired abroad, a disconcerting story is told.

The entire island of Sicily was about to be struck by revolution in the late 1700s. Lighting the fuse was a court scholar, Abbot Giuseppe Vella. Having come into possession of an Arabic manuscript, Vella presented it as a sensational and destabilizing document, in fact suggesting that the Sicilian political order (the estates, fiefdoms and baronies) was entirely illegitimate.

It was not true, Vella argued, that those lands were inherited in an orderly legal manner by the nobles immediately following the period of Arab rule on the island, seven centuries earlier. In other words, the aristocratic power established on the island was not legitimate. It did not derive from duly granted concessions.

Then, all of a sudden, his thesis collapsed.

It was discovered that Vella – the only person at the court of Palermo who knew Arabic – had completely fabricate that translation. The “Council of Egypt” was in no way a correction of the chronology of the early dynastic partition of Sicily, based on recognized grants. That Arabic document was simply a Life of the Prophet, a very common Muslim text of religious inspiration.

The name of the protagonist of this literary work of fiction, Vella, closely resembles another surname: Valla. To be precise, Lorenzo Valla, a real historical figure and someone whom Leonardo Sciascia knew very well.

A fine man of letters himself, he was an Italian Humanist, philologist, writer, philosopher and academic – and the author of another accusation, but not a hoax. This was a serious accusation, based on factual evidence.

In 1440, Valla discovered that the so-called Donation of Constantine was a forgery. The Latin it was written in could not possibly have been used in 315 CE, at the dawn of Roman Christianity.

This was yet another certainty collapsing, but this time it was based on

irrefutable evidence. The document, written from scratch much more recently and in a Latin that was clearly medieval, completely fell apart. But that apocryphal text had served as the basis for the Catholic Church's claim to temporal power over the lands of the Roman Empire. This decision was even traced back to the will of Constantine the Great, the Emperor who in 325 CE put an end to the persecutions of the first Christians and make Christianity the State Religion.

Vella and Valla: opposite ways of handling translations, arriving at sensationally unpredictable results.

Does this remind us of anyone?

Vella distorts the truth and cheats, having the manuscript say something that the text does not say.

Valla, on the other hand, as a kind of mirror image, does precisely the contrary. He debunks a similar fabrication.

Was Sciascia perhaps taking the opportunity to make other allusions by choosing the given name of his anti-hero, the author of a work of forgery?

In the novel, Vella's first name is Giuseppe, or Joseph – like the most famous carpenter in history. He was only the foster father of a very strange son, born in Bethlehem as the result of an inexplicable miracle.

And who is the second most famous carpenter in history?

Geppetto, which is a diminutive form of Giuseppe.

So another Giuseppe, just like the companion of Mary of Nazareth. Geppetto is also the unusual parent of a decidedly singular child: Pinocchio, the protagonist of a fable.

Wasn't the imaginary 'Council of Egypt' created by Vella's translation a fable as well?

And wasn't the Donation of Constantine also a fable, one whose authors' deceitful intent was unmasked by the similarly-named Valla?

As for Pinocchio, the symbolic interpretations of this masterpiece, written at the end of the 19th century by the Italian Freemason Carlo Alberto Lorenzini (whose pen name was Collodi) are still quite striking. Lovers of allegory suggest a symbolic transposition of the Christ figure in theology, especially in its Gnostic interpretation. Man can "become God" if he chooses the truth of profound knowledge, of universal love, just as a wooden puppet (and a tremendous liar) can "become a real boy" and therefore "rise again", if

he agrees to transform himself into a “good” honest person.

Biglino underlines some other key aspects of both stories: the parallels between Collodi’s creation and the Messiah of the New Testament.

“For example, we only know Jesus’ mother, just as we only know Pinocchio’s father. Both seem to have originated from just one parent (at least one human one).”

They have a beginning in common but also a similar end. In the first edition of the fairy tale, poor Pinocchio ended his days hanging from an oak tree.

“Not nailed to a cross, perhaps, but hung from wood nonetheless.”

A tale of death and resurrection, in both cases.

“And what are Pinocchio’s last words before he dies? He exclaims, “Oh father! If only you were here!”

Remarkable, isn’t it?

These words are nearly identical to the ones the Gospels attribute to the man crucified on Golgotha: “El-i, El-i, lama sabachtan-i.” Literally, My El, My El, why have you abandoned me?

These are all speculations, of course, based on the view of Jesus provided by the theological approach. He is presented as a great spiritual teacher and mystical savior of humanity, the God who is made man, finally making the ultimate sacrifice in crucifixion.

But how, in the so-called “sacred” literature, do we manage to cross the threshold of pure spirituality?

On this matter Biglino has very precise ideas. The very first Bible was modified first by Josiah, the sovereign who – for understandable reasons of decorum – attempted to erase the memory of the barbarism of the initial human sacrifices. It was the Jewish priesthood who gradually carried out the first “spiritual” manipulations. But a real masterpiece was accomplished by the famous 70 Sages, the authors of the Septuagint. The Jews of the Diaspora, having taken refuge in Egypt, rewrote the Bible in Greek, translating it very freely. In this Bible of the Seventy, which later influenced the Latin version, notions of Hellenistic origin previously absent from the Hebrew text are thus introduced: Soul, Spirit, omnipotence, life after death.

“These are all elements that were borrowed from Greek Platonism, acquired a posteriori and included in the Septuagint to allow the exiles to inscribe Judaism among the great traditions of the Mediterranean, thus

adopting a new language and new contents that would please the people of the third century BCE.”

This is not taken into account, though, when it is claimed that “the Bible” is a sort of monolith, stuck in time and unchanged for millennia.

Even today, Catholic Catechism – to which Mauro Biglino devotes special attention in extremely meticulous videos on YouTube that examine biblical citations – presents itself as religious teaching firmly anchored in the Old Testament.

The proposed version is always the same. The Christian Messiah is the son of the God of the Jews. His mission is to redeem humanity from death, which was introduced into this world by the original sin committed by Adam and Eve, who were practically immortal before that infamous betrayal.

“All false,” claims Biglino. “Nowhere is it written that the life of the Adamites was eternal in the Gan Eden. Hardly surprising, since not even the Elohim were immortal!”

On top of that, there is no trace whatsoever of the concept of eternity in the Bible. This misconception stems from a mistranslation of the word “olam”. “That term simply means ‘time whose duration is unknown’ and more often than not, ‘unknown place’.”

A very serious issue, one that is still relevant.

“Some Hebrew dictionaries always warn that ‘olam’ should not be translated as ‘eternity’. How is this term translated in the Bibles we have at home still today?”

You guessed it.

Eternity.

Rather than Lorenzo Valla, we seem to be reading Abbot Vella here, the famous imaginative forger of the aforementioned novel.

Better still, Bishop Eusebius of Caesarea comes to mind, the man who re-evaluated the writings of Philo of Byblos based on the memoirs of the Phoenician Sanchuniaton. Speaking of forgeries, as early as 1200 BCE he argued that religion was a kind of “narrative fiction”, a story invented by the priestly caste of the time. Their objective was to maintain power and conceal the true identity of the so-called deities.

To be clear, we are talking about the same lords who went for outings with the Ruach and the Kavod, rode Cherubims like flying scooters and, when deemed necessary, incinerated entire cities with “the weapon of terror”

launched from the sky as soon as the inhabitants displayed any intention of no longer honoring the “political” alliance they had with them.

In short, a literal reading of the Bible is quite problematic. The deeper we dig into those verses, the greater the risk of discovering that the whole narrative emerging from them appears to have nothing to do with what theology tends to make the Old Testament say.

Biglino is clear: “Far be it from me to challenge the full legitimacy of theological speculation. What does theology do? It elaborates an idea of God. To this I say very well, but I would also add that problems arise when Christian theology claims to base its convictions on the biblical text. There is only one way to do that: by distorting the Old Testament and making it say something it has never said.”

Any particularly sensational case you have in mind?

Among the many, there’s the most famous Christ-related prophecy.

In chapter 7 of the Book of Isaiah, we have the famous prophecy apparently concerning the birth of Jesus.

The translated verses say: “Behold, the virgin shall conceive and give birth to a son whom she will call Emmanuel.”

This seems like a perfect fit, connecting the Old and New Testament: a prophetic prediction of the coming of the Christian Messiah. This interpretation is almost two thousand years old and is still accredited today.

“Not by everyone, though. In 2016, the German Bishops’ Conference finally accepted correct translations for that particular verse.”

Which is?

“In fact, in Hebrew, there is no mention of a virgin, just a young woman, a maiden. The Hebrew term for virgin is ‘betullah’, while the Hebrew term used in Isaiah is ‘almah’, which only means ‘young girl’.”

In other words, that biblical verse has nothing to do with the future birth of Jesus.

Are we sure of that?

“Absolutely. Isaiah does not speak of the Madonna, but of a girl named Abiia, as is written in the Second Book of Kings and in the Second Book of Chronicles.”

And who was this Abiia?

“She was the wife of King Ahaz of Judea and at that time, she was

pregnant. She was about to give birth to Hezekiah, the future king of Judea.”

A “misunderstanding” that has held sway for centuries?

“It was perfect for supporting various assumptions. To begin with, the formidable infallibility of biblical prophecies. And above all, the importance – confirmed by the Old Testament – of the mission of the future Messiah.”

So this is all wrong?

Yes. And now even the German bishops write as much. “They admit that, in the verses of Isaiah, it says clearly that the young girl was already pregnant when the text was written.”

No ‘virgin’ at who would, one very distant day, give birth to a special son destined to change the history of humanity.

None of that: the very young Abiia, in fact, had already conceived at the time of Isaiah. She was pregnant and was just about to give birth.

“In the footnotes of the German edition of the Bible”, Biglino acknowledges with satisfaction, “it is also specified that ‘almah’ means ‘young woman, not ‘virgin’.”

Shocking?

Perhaps it is, for those accustomed to having the Bible recounted to them.

Mauro Biglino, however, is not at all disturbed.

“This is just one of many so-called biblical prophecies that have been interpreted as such: as predictions of the future”.

They aren’t?

“No, they aren’t. They were adapted after the fact to give validity and antiquity to the ‘sacred’ history that has been elaborated by theology.”

Another example of this? The so-called “vision of Jacob”.

“Chapter 28 of Genesis tells us about it. On his way to Carran, Jacob stops for the night and lies down. During the night, he sees a ladder resting on the ground, while its top reaches into the sky. On this ladder, ‘angels’ go up and down.”

These, though, are not the winged angels of later Christian iconography. These are the Malachim, the messengers of the Elohim.

“The Hebrew term Malachim is translated as ‘angels’, and doctrinal, theological tradition has always presented them as spiritual entities. In reality,” Biglino specifies, “the term *Malach* indicates ‘the one who brings a message’. The Malachim, in fact, were used as messengers, guardians, monitors, and also as executors of the orders of the Elohim.”

So that is who Jacob ‘sees’ in his vision going up and down that ladder reaching up to heaven.

If we put on the lenses through which we see the ‘glory of God’ as the more prosaic ‘Kavod of Yahweh’, even Jacob’s nocturnal vision might be suggesting a very different reality.

“That ladder seems to refer to the presence of some sort of transport system, or in any case a communication system between the Earth and something that was in the sky. A transport system used by the so-called angels. Not being spiritual entities at all, they used that ladder to go up and down.”

Subsequently, Biglino adds, the original description “was artificially interpreted in a prophetic vein, according to the various periods during which the Jewish nation was subjected to foreign domination.”

Later Jewish tradition then attributed different counts of the number of steps taken by different angels. To every single group of steps would correspond to precise ‘prophetic’ dating.

There is call for caution. “This interpretation was written after the events had already taken place. The durations of the various periods, then, were only written down once those historical periods had long been over.”

In other words, the chronological indications that Jacob ‘receives’ by observing the movement of the ‘angels’ going up and down that ladder are indeed accurate. But it could not have been otherwise, given that the historical phases mentioned had already been completed.

Yes. All but one.

“The only chronological fact that is missing is the one relating to the period of the so-called Roman domination, which at the time of writing had not yet ended.”

In this case, the authors were not able to make the ‘angels’ climb a precise number of steps.

“From this we can deduce that the prophetic value of this interpretation is almost nil.”

Once again, Biglino’s reasoning is flawless.

“It must be reiterated, though, that all the biblical prophecies were written ex-post-facto, at a time when the facts narrated had already occurred. In fact, as the rabbis write, ‘prophecies’ were often modified over time, adapting them to various situations.”

This is the case of the prophecy of the ‘490 years of Daniel’, which prophesies, among other things, the taking of Jerusalem by the Roman Empire.

“In reality, at first, the Book of Daniel spoke of barely 70 years of waiting. Then it was changed to ‘70 weeks of years’ to artificially include certain events in the years indicated ‘prophetically’ by the text.”

Vella or Valla, then? When it comes to handling ancient words with a good dose of creativity, which one wins?

Which one ends up on top? Pure fiction, literally embodied in the deeds of an impostor like the Abbot of Sciascia? Or the philological rigor of the Renaissance Humanist who discovered the scam of the Donation of Constantine? Which ultimately prevails?

According to Biglino, it is the first one: absolute ‘creativity’ not based on any adherence to the texts.

Were we just talking about angels?

“Generally, they were fearsome characters. Individuals of flesh and blood who ate, walked, got dirty and had to clean themselves. They could even be attacked, as it is clear in the story of Lot, in Sodom, when he is visited by two ‘angels’ who risk being attacked by the crowd.”

So it wasn’t that nice to meet them.

“Saint Paul was also aware of this. In a letter, he warns women against ever showing up with head uncovered to gatherings where so-called ‘angels’ might be present.”

Regarding ‘the sexuality of angels’, it looks like they had a fondness for long-haired girls and were sexually aroused by them. And, apparently, they weren’t too subtle about it, either.”

Yes. Nor were they subtle with the lives of men.

A telling episode is one quoted in chapter 6 of the Book of Judges, when Gideon meets one of these Malachim.

The so-called ‘angel’ asks him to bring him food, and Gideon obeys.

“At which point the ‘angel’ makes him put it on a stone. Using an instrument he was holding in his hand, he instantly sets fire to it all.”

In the face of this spectacle, Gideon lets out a cry. He is terrified. The ‘angel’ reassures him. “You will not die,” he tells him

“This means that an encounter with the ‘angels’ - the Malachims - was

generally neither a pleasant nor a welcome one. In fact, it could even be dangerous.”

So the biblical angels weren't very reassuring.

And what about the other great figure cited by theology as the unyielding opponent?

“I was around when Jesus Christ had his moment of doubt and pain.”

It is Satan himself who is speaking here.

“Made damn sure that Pilate washed his hands and sealed his fate.”

These lyrics are by Mick Jagger, the Rolling Stones' front man.

“Sympathy for the Devil” is the song, and it dates back to half a century ago.

The Stones' Devil is a tempter.

“Stole many a man's soul and faith,” he confesses. But then he reveals some very earthly aspects of his true nature.

“Stuck around St. Petersburg when I saw it was time for a change.

The Russian Revolution. “I killed the Tsar and his ministers, Anastasia screamed in vain.”

He is a contemporary demon, one of war. “I rode a tank, held a general's rank when the blitzkrieg raged and the bodies stank.”

Not a very “supernatural” demon, is he? He rather seems inherent to the human soul. Like a “dark” side of us all, an evil inclination in humanity.

He is reminiscent of the devil that Bernard of Clairvaux always keeps on a leash in medieval representations. Saint Bernard's message is that is better not to be hypocrites, since evil is present within us all. The key is to recognize it and subdue it, neutralize it.

“Angels and Demons” are also discussed by Dan Brown in his 2004 bestselling novel. But they are real people and special agents (of good and evil).

In ancient Greek, the verb ‘diaballo’, meaning ‘to divide’, summarizes the concept of opposition. Is it perhaps something biblical?

It certainly seems so.

“Satan,” Biglino explains, “is a word which in Hebrew means ‘adversary’, or ‘public accuser’.”

Careful, though: “In the Bible, this does not indicate the spirit of evil, let alone the lord of demons. The term Hebrew term “Satan” actually stands for a position that had to be filled temporarily, and in some cases even by order of

Yahweh himself.”

“The role of Satan could be covered either by one of the Elohim or the Malachim, or even by a human, precisely because it does not indicate the evil entity that theology refers to.”

It is pointless to deny it. Flying over the Bible with Biglino’s magic carpet is always a little strange.

No demon-Satan. And farewell to two millennia of fear, threatening evocations, shadowy phenomena and their related exorcisms.

Satan? Not a character at all but rather a function. A social role, and a temporary one at that.

Today we would call it a state prosecutor.

And what about those famous biblical devils, who “brightened” the whole of Medieval Christendom?

“When theology created the figure of the spiritual transcendent God, starting with Yahweh,” Biglino explains, “it made spiritual rivals of all those who, in reality, were just other Elohim. Contenders for the dominion over the same lands.”

One such Elohim, continues the scholar, was called Baal Peor. It means ‘lord of the exposure of the sexual organs’. And, in fact, he made his followers perform many sexual rites.

“His name was then transliterated in Greek as Baal Fegor.”

The same thing happened to his “colleague” Baal Zavuv, another Elohim competing with Yahweh. Baal Zavuv means ‘lord of the flies’.

Actually, just two rivals of the Israelite El and similar to them in all respects. But when Yahweh was transformed into the ‘One God’, his competitors were demoted to the rank of ‘devils’.

Their current names?

Belphegor and Beelzebub, of course.

Returning once again to the writer Sciascia, there seems to be no match: Vella wins over Valla. Pure imagination triumphs.

“Power to the imagination,” as was said in legendary 1968. Coincidentally the same year that Mick Jagger gave voice to his very human devil.

Did he, too, know something about the true story of Satan?

The Invention of the Biblical God and of His Antagonist, the Satan

Do no evil, have no fear.

An old adage, referring to the palpable presence of an impending judgment and possible punishment should deplorable crimes be committed.

Is this always true, even in a religious context?

Needless to say, Biglino refutes this as well. It is enough for him to go through the latest edition of the Catholic Catechism, as he did in a video interview published on December 3, 2020.

Article 1038 mentions the “last judgment”, in which the faithful “all hope to be saved because they trust in the goodness of the ‘Father God’ as presented by Christian theology.

We read, “Then Christ will come ‘in his glory, and all the angels with him. Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will place the sheep at his right hand, but the goats at the left. And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.’”

The Catechism quotes the Gospel according to Matthew 25:31-46.

What kind of crimes have the “goats” committed to deserve such a punishment without remission?

“Go away from me, you cursed ones,” he addresses them, sending them “into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his followers.”

The charges are as follow: “Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food, I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink, I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, lacking clothes and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me.”

To the protestations of the “goats”, the response is inflexible.

“In truth I tell you, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.”

The sentence is confirmed: everlasting punishment.

“It is not the perpetrators of heinous crimes who are condemned here, but people who simply did not do their utmost to do good,” observes Biglino. “It seems to me that this sentence is being motivated by incomprehensible ruthlessness, especially considering that it is being handed down by the very one who said, ‘forgive, up to seventy times seven.’”

There is no lighter penalty for those who have not been altruistic enough.

A thesis that is refuted though, and very clearly, again in the Gospel of Matthew. In chapter 25, the text presents the famous parable of the ten virgins, engaged in preparations on the eve of a wedding feast (which symbolizes the ‘kingdom of heaven’).

The young women go to meet the groom at night, carrying lamps. When the man finally arrives much later, only half the girls still have their lamps on and are ready to light his way.

The others lacked the foresight to bring along a supply of oil for themselves. So they ask the five “sensible” virgins for some but they refuse.: “Go and buy it yourselves from the vendors.”

Basically, they are told to figure it out on your own.

Having found some oil, the “foolish” girls rush to the banquet. But this time it is the groom himself who rejects them. “In truth I tell you, I do not know you.”

Is there anything more ruthless and further from the idea of forgiveness?

“And who is this hypothetical kingdom of heaven rewarding? The ‘sensible’ virgins. So far, so good: they are commendable. But when the ‘distracted’ virgins ask them for help, they don’t give it. They are clearly selfish: if you forgot to bring extra oil, that’s your problem. And in the end, who is rewarded by the groom? They are! And he punishes the others, who had committed a simple error, not a crime. And yet, for this reason alone, they are no longer worthy of entering the kingdom of heaven.”

How can this ruthlessness be reconciled with the figure of the infinitely compassionate divinity personified by Jesus?

“The character presented to us,” says Biglino, “appears to be totally in line with the so-called “God the Father” of the Old Testament, who is equally ruthless in barring the Temple – so direct contact with him – to people who have committed no crime, but are simply affected by disease or deformity.”

In chapter 21 of Leviticus, it is Yahweh himself who gives precise instructions to Moses regarding who will not be permitted to approach him

physically. To Aaron, the high priest, Moses will have to give very strict orders.

“None of your descendants, for all time, may come forward to offer the food of his God if he has any infirmity, for none may come forward if he has an infirmity, be he blind or lame, disfigured or deformed, or with an injured foot or arm, a hunchback, someone with rickets or ophthalmia or the scab or running sores, or a eunuch.”

Yahweh demands Aaron’s descendants be always in full health and free of physical problems. The deformed and the ill will not be able to approach the Temple “to offer the food of his God.”

And what sin would these blind or deformed people be guilty of? None.

“God simply doesn’t like them. He doesn’t want to see them.”

This, Biglino adds, is hardly the only such restrictive biblical passage.

“No illegitimate child shall be admitted to the community of the Lord,” we read in chapter 23 of Deuteronomy, and his descendants shall be admitted, “not even at the tenth generation.”

In his examination of these passages, Biglino sees no clear break between the Old and New Testaments at all, starting with the inflexible exclusion of the “goats” in the passage from Matthew quoted in the Catechism.

Sheep, for evident historical reasons, are frequently evoked to illustrate moral teachings.

There is the pithy little parable of “the good shepherd” that appears in the Gospel of John.

“I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd lays down his life for his sheep. The hired man, since he is not the shepherd and the sheep do not belong to him, abandons the sheep as soon as he sees a wolf coming, and runs away, and then the wolf attacks and scatters the sheep.”

Mauro Biglino has never liked this allegory, finding it misleading.

“It is true that the shepherd defends the sheep from the wolf. But then to do what with them? In real life, we know the answer: the shepherd protects his animals because he will have to milk and shear them and, in the end, he will be the one, not the wolf, to slaughter them, sell them or eat them.”

This love and concern for animals is only apparent, temporary and instrumental. It also brings certain evil ideas to mind, the ideas of those who today talk about social-zootechnics.

These moral considerations so systematically expressed are also completely out of place.

Good and evil?

We all know that ethics are mutable and that there is nothing more unstable over time.

A classic example? Socrates. Convicted on charges of “corruption of the young.” Pedophilia, basically. But sexual relationships with minors was an ordinary accepted practice in ancient Greece.

The other charge against Socrates must have been far more annoying to the regents of Athens, the charge of rebelling against the established order, exemplified by his refusal to recognize the polis’ traditional divinities, and thus its powerful priests.

Incidentally, these deities were still the same, Homeric other: characters who travelled the skies on their Kavods, who demanded a daily dose of fat to be roasted and greedily sucked down.

Isn’t it odd that proper religions were born of all this?

The old story of the Phoenician Sanchuniaton brings to mind a certain magic word: manipulation. Deformation of reality, concealment of facts, and the ad hoc construction of an agreed-upon version: a mythology of origins.

It seems as though this text were modified relatively recently, a text that must have been a realistic account of some very real and not particularly edifying events at the beginning of time.

For example, possible contact with the so-called Gods.

This, after all, is the principal hypothesis all the investigative work being conducted by Mauro Biglino, starting with the textual examination of how the biblical texts have been handled.

“A spiritualizing re-elaboration of the most ancient texts began between the fifth and fourth centuries BCE,” he says. “A concept of reward and punishment, previously absent, was introduced, gradually breaking away from what the relationship with Yahweh had originally been, when people limited themselves to asking for his help to gain power, success and well-being”.

Nothing about eternal life. “The promises of Yahweh were expected to be fulfilled in this lifetime, which for the biblical authors was the only real matter of interest.”

Something material, immediate, reasonable, without any hint of the metaphysical or the mystical.

Everything else – from the notion of good and evil, to a spiritual meaning – comes much later and are much later concepts.

“The ‘righteous ones’ of Sodom, like Lot, are not necessarily good individuals. They are simply people who remained faithful to the covenant made with Yahweh and thus distant from his rival Elohim.”

The concept of justice as we understand it today was certainly not the key element in the Sodom affair.

The same goes for the idea of evil. It simply meant distancing oneself from Yahweh’s daily rules.

And what about Satan? What can we say about the “Prince of Darkness” who fascinates Satanists and worries exorcists?

“The concept of Satan seems to pre-date the Judeo-Christian culture”.

The character we know today, explains Biglino, “was elaborated over the centuries by the Fathers of the Church.”

And what did they start with?

“They were inspired by the few hints the Bible makes of him. In particular, they artificially connected him to the Lucifer character that the prophet Isaiah speaks about.”

Isaiah talks about Lucifer?

“Yes, but he uses this term ironically in reference to a powerful Babylonian ruler who believed himself to be a bearer of light but who fell disastrously.”

It turns out that there is always a clue that forces us to keep our eyes on the text in order to avoid falling into the realm of the intangible and the prophetic.

The Lucifer of Isaiah was a Babylonian sovereign and an enemy of the Jews, and he seems to mirror the Beast of the Apocalypse, identified by the infamous 666: the Emperor Nero, so feared by the first Christians.

If we lose sight of the text, anything can happen.

“Satan has even been connected with the serpent that tempted Eve, but there is actually no trace of this link in the Bible.”

As a matter of fact – and this is much more relevant to us – in the Hebrew Bible there is never even a mention of a word that is very important to us: God.

Biglino has dedicated several books to this topic, all with particularly eloquent titles:

There Is No Creation in the Bible. The Bible Is Not a Holy Book. And most importantly of all, *The Bible Does Not Speak About God.*

It is his thesis that in the Old Testament the divine act par excellence, the so-called “creation from nothing”, does not appear.

How could one really write a book about an omnipotent and omniscient divinity by using a language that does not even consider the word for “God”?

“The term ‘God’ as we understand it,” Biglino explains, only enters the Bible with the translation into Latin by St. Jerome, in the 4th century CE.”

Before that, the word just wasn’t in the Old Testament.

It is Jerome who introduces that expression in Latin: “Deus”.

An expression we know derives from the Greek “Theos”.

And we also know which and how many “theoi” it was referring to, before the idea of the one God made its way into Mediterranean cultures.

“Careful, though. Originally, ‘theos’ wasn’t even a noun, it was just an adjective. It meant ‘the act of moving quickly in space’. Like the stars do.”

As though the gods were essentially just guardians, overseers with extraordinary abilities.

“It was only later that theology elaborated the concept of a ‘Deus’, transforming it into the God that we know today.”

The point is that this idea was placed in the Bible some 1600 years ago.

“Yes, but in reality there is no Hebrew word for God, understood as a transcendent and spiritual entity.”

Reading it in the original language reveals this quite clearly.

“In the Bible, if anything, it is the *Elohim* that are constantly mentioned.”

Like Yahweh, often referred to as Yeowah.

There is Elyon and there is El Shaddai.

And what about God?

He doesn’t appear in the text.

“God is the word artificially used to translate the term *Elohim*, whose true meaning is not known.”

Biglino is sure of this.

“There is no one in the world today who can correctly translate the word *Elohim*.”

In our Bibles, translated into modern languages, there is another frequently-occurring term: Most High.

“Of course. The Most High is the absolute superlative, rendering the biblical term ‘Elyon’. But in reality it simply means ‘he who is above’.”

Elyon, explains the translator, is also used to indicate, for example, the upper part of a village, or the upper floor of a house.

In Psalm 82, however, Elyon is mentioned directly during the assembly of the Elohim. He appears to be their supreme leader, in fact presiding over the assembly. He even admonishes them he warns them: do not even think of abusing your powers and treating humans so despotically. It is in this famous passage that the Elohim are reminded that they are mortal, just like the Adamites.

The appropriateness of the expression “God Most High” to the text is questionable. In any case, in Hebrew it is not a superlative, much less an absolute one.

And what about the Almighty?

“Pure fantasy in this case as well. The term ‘almighty’ is used as the translation of El Shaddai.”

It appears for the first time in chapter 17 of Genesis.

“I am El Shaddai,” he says to Abraham, introducing himself.

So what does El Shaddai mean?

“The most probable meaning is ‘lord of the steppes’, as stated by Catholic exegesis itself.”

So Elyon becomes the God Most High and El Shaddai the Almighty.

And what about the Eternal?

“Yet another arbitrary interpretation. ‘Eeternal’ is an erroneous translation of the Hebrew word ‘olam’ which only means ‘unknown’. It can refer to time but more often to space. In one of the Psalms, Yahweh is said to be ‘Lord of Olam’, which probably meant that his land of origin was not known.”

So unknown. Not eternal.

“The concept of eternity is, in fact, not part of ancient Semitic culture. ‘Lord’ (along with ‘the Eternal One’) is another of the terms used to translate Yahweh.

Do we have any idea of the origin of the term Yahweh?

“There are a variety of hypotheses because it is unknown. We do not even know in what language it was originally pronounced.”

Reassuring, isn't it?

Perhaps it's time to stop and take a deep breath.

To summarize: in the Bible, 'God' does not exist.

There are Elyon, El Shaddai, Yahweh and the other Elohim, including Kamosh and Milkom, (Beelzebub and Belfagor, or rather Baal Zavuv and Baal Peor).

Of course, we can continue to pretend that God Most High, the Eternal and Almighty really do appear in the Old Testament. We can believe that there is "the holy spirit" instead of the Ruach, and "the glory of God" instead of the Yahweh's Kavod.

We can believe that there really was the Disneyesque character of a talking snake who tempted poor Eve, and we can even continue to believe that an apple actually existed.

But that wouldn't be the truth.

There never was an apple. Eden was not the Earthly Paradise: the Gan was a kind of protected experimental breeding lab.

There is no hint in those pages of the creation of the universe: no trace whatsoever of the verb "to create" is to be found. And the beautiful Hebrew word "Bereshit" probably just means "at the beginning of this story", not "at the beginning of time".

We can believe in the curse of the "plagues of Egypt", or we can read the news about the catastrophic gaseous emissions on the shores of African lakes such as Nyos in Cameroon or Kivu, on the border between the Congo and Rwanda: the sudden coloring of the waters, which turned blood-red, accompanied by lethal fumes, which wreaked havoc on the coastal population and caused a disastrous chain of consequences, even for livestock, like those described in the Exodus.

What to believe?

Even Hebrew exegesis has always reflected an awareness of the exact meaning of expressions like Yam-Suf: a sea of reeds. There was never any mention of the Red Sea Moses saga.

The same is true for Satan. In the Bible, there is no trace of the Evil One, no "Prince of Darkness."

Similarly, Jewish scholars have always known that the Adamites were made by genetic cloning and manipulation. And they know that the Cherubim

and Serafim have never been cute little baby-faced angels, but rather technological, mechanical objects.

Who should we listen to?

Mauro Biglino says that we need to decide that for ourselves.

“I have said this repeatedly, in dozens of conferences. Don’t believe what I tell you, either. But trust me when I tell you to do yourselves a favor and read the Bible for yourselves. You’ll discover many interesting things. At least that is what happened to me. As I was translating, it seemed to me that many traditional meanings were falling away. However, another story was taking shape, emerging, and one no less fascinating: a story that most likely is our story. The story of our true origin, which the Bible – if read without any filters – seems to be telling honestly, despite a thousand shortcomings and contradictions.

A true story?

“Nobody can say that with any certainty. I repeat: the Old Testament is devoid of sources. They are unknown to us.”

On the other hand, the narrative our biblical translator presents is extremely plausible. It is a very serious account, one of eminently measurable sincerity. It displays no hesitation in providing even the goriest of details when discussing the character that theology later transformed into a spiritual divinity. If they had wanted to celebrate an omniscient loving superior being, they would have avoided talking about wars and massacres, little girls, human sacrifices and animal fat to be eviscerated.

The biblical story may be able to cast light on many aspects of our most remote past, but on one condition: that it be free from any ideological and cultural filters of our age and of those that preceded it.

According to scientists, the Earth has existed for four and a half billion years.

The great religions claiming to “reveal” our origins to us, however, are only 2,500 years old.

Not even three millennia. As opposed to 4.6 billion years.

Can you wrap your head around the enormity of this fact?

Those Strange, Scary Angels

The work of Mauro Biglino is notable for the relentless precision with which it demolishes commonly-held beliefs, solidified by religious interpretations of the ancient texts.

An almost inevitable demolition, if one reads the actual text of the Scriptures.

The Angels of the Lord?

Nice. Beautiful. Consoling.

But what is really meant by “angel” and “Lord”?

And above all: what does the Bible actually say?

In the Hebrew text, “the angel of the Lord” does not appear. What does appear is “Yahweh’s Malach”, which sounds very different.

Everything has an explanation, a historical one in this case.

“The transformation of the Malachim into spiritual entities,” Biglino states, “took place during the theological elaborations carried out by the Church Fathers, during the first centuries of the common era. This transformation,” he adds, “goes hand in hand with the one that led to the transmutation of Yahweh, the ruler of the Israelites, into a unique transcendent being and a spiritual, omnipotent, omniscient entity.”

A grandiose reinterpretation, in short, which presented a series of elements that is completely absent from the original text.

“This is what happened. Theology created a spiritual world with ‘the angels of the Lord’, rather than the biblical ‘Malach of Yahweh’.”

“And it is theology that, through the centuries, populated that world with all those characters in the Old Testament who, in reality, were just individuals in flesh and blood.”

Angels and archangels.

“The term ‘archangel’ refers to a specific function within the military hierarchy of the Elohim and the Malachim. The archangels were those who held the higher ranks, standing in command over all the other angels.”

A typical example of this is the Archangel Michael, the arch-strategist.

“Mikael is defined as ‘one of the first commanders’, precisely to underline

his high rank. Today we could compare him to an army general.”

Do we have any idea of what these archangels looked like?

We certainly do. The physiognomy of the entire group led by the Elohim, Biglino summarizes, is described to us rather precisely.

“They were individuals similar to us, but always tall. Very light, shiny eyes. And blond hair, sometimes reddish.”

This can deduce this from many stories. One of them is quite well known, its protagonist a very important figure in the Bible: Noah.

“The figure of Noah turns out to be really special within the dynasty of antediluvian patriarchs. After the children of the Elohim had joined with the females of the Adamites, a series of events occurred on Earth that was displeasing to the leaders of the Elohim. So their leaders decided to get rid of that part of the human race, sparing only Noah and his family.”

The Bible says that this choice was due to the fact that Noah was a righteous man.

Once again, this does not mean that he was an honest and morally unrepachable individual.

With the adjective “righteous”, at least in this case, the Bible is simply stating that he was a man

“whose physio-anatomical structure was deemed acceptable to the Elohim.”

In this matter, Biglino explains, the Ethiopian Book of Enoch is much more explicit. In fact, it also tells us a revealing detail about the moment of Noah’s birth.

“His father, Lamech, saw that the baby had very white skin, with red-blond hair and eyes so clear, big and bright, that they seemed to light up the room.”

Those characteristics terrified him: Lamech exclaimed that this was no son of his. The baby looked like a “son of angels”.

Here is a confirmation: the physiognomy of little Noah (practically an albino) is typical of the hierarchies of the Elohim and the Malachim.

At this point, Lamech seeks some explanations. They are given to him by a notable character in the book: the patriarch Enoch.

So who was Enoch?

“The Bible says that ‘Enoch went back and forth with the Elohim’ until the day the Elohim themselves took him away for good.”

In the face of Lamech’s dismay at the unusual appearance of his newborn

son Noah, Enoch calms him down, bringing Lamech to accept the very strange situation he and his family find themselves in.

“Noah was one of the children that the Elohim had produced through their direct intervention, giving him their genetic makeup.”

And what about the Great Flood?

“It served the purpose of ‘cleansing’ the Earth (or at least that region) of the ‘serpent lineage’, which must have spread rampantly, ruining the very selective initial plans of the Gan Eden geneticists.”

So meteorological eugenics, using a flood?

“Or worse, the so-called Deluge may have been created in an even more artificial manner, with the strategic sudden opening of a dam.” The event alluded to at the beginning of Genesis sounds like some hydraulic work of optimization, once it is cleared of the mythical mists of creationism.”

Here we are once again, with Mauro Biglino recounting the Bible to us in his own way.

He presents it as it is written, word for word, in case it might reveal to us something significant about our possible origin.

The story of Noah’s birth is astounding: in this newborn child, Lamech immediately recognizes the traits of the Elohim and their lieutenants, the Malachim.

Angels and archangels, like the renowned Gabriel.

“Allow me to point something out. In the Bible, ‘the archangel Gabriel’ doesn’t do anything. It is the Ghever-El that act. This was a specific category of individuals, special ‘archangels’. The name ‘Gabriel’ itself derives from Ghever-El, which mean ‘the power of an El’.”

And it is Gabriel (or rather, a Ghever-El) who often ends up visiting women.

“After Adam, we have other characters who were born as a result of the intervention of one of the Elohim, or of someone working on their behalf.”

The Bible recounts his doings with great precision. Sometimes, the “visitor” to certain women is someone just like the archangel of the Annunciation. Other times, however, the “visitor” is Yahweh himself.

The first intervention of this sort, Biglino reminds us, was with Abraham’s wife, Sarah, who was unable to have children. In this case, the problem-solver is not “Gabriel”, since Sarah gets pregnant after being “visited” by

none other than Yahweh himself.

“Samson was born after his mother had been visited by an ‘angel’.”

But Jacob and Esau were also born after their infertile mother had been visited by Yahweh.

“And an interesting thing to note here is that the same thing happens in the tales of other ancient civilizations as well. When divinities came to visit women, they often gave birth to twins.”

It is particularly interesting to note that the exact same thing happens frequently even today in cases of assisted reproduction.”

Among the many unusual conceptions recounted in those sacred texts, the most important is certainly the one leading to the birth of Jesus.

“Mary becomes pregnant after being visited by ‘Gabriel’, or rather a Ghever-El, who works on behalf of an El, so literally, someone exercising power on behalf of an El”.

Meaning the following: “The Madonna would have become pregnant after having had a sexual encounter with one of them. This act was probably intended to restore royal dignity to a particular lineage, the dynasty of David, to which the kingdom had been promised.”

Biglino carefully examines the case in his essay entitled “Gods and demigods”. Technically, the child born in Bethlehem would be comparable to the Homeric heroes, those born of the union between a human being and one of the so-called divinities.

Neither more nor less than Achilles, son of the Greek Peleus and of a water nymph, the Nereid Thetis.

So Achilles, certainly. And Noah.

Not only is Noah a biblical character, but he also seems to be perfectly cast from the same mold as other similar characters who play the role of protagonist in the same kind of epic adventure: safe aboard a boat on the open sea in a world devastated by a flood.

“As the rabbis themselves write in their studies, many of the tales in the Book of Genesis are actually derived from Sumerian and Akkadian stories, and the story of Noah, in fact, can already be found in those tales.”

Utnapishtim – the Sumerian-Akkadian Noah, also called Ziusudra – is the protagonist in those.

“He too is being warned by a deity of the imminent flood that is about to destroy that part of humanity.”

The similarities between the two stories are striking.

“As in the Biblical account, the Sumerian Noah builds an ark to save himself and his family. And again, once the flood is over, Noah’s Sumerian counterpart celebrates by making a sacrifice in honor of the gods, roasting a large number of animals for them.”

The Sumerian tale, Biglino observes, is even more precise than the biblical one, emphasizing that the deities, o the Anunnaki, are attracted by the smoke and flock to it “like flies to meat.”

“This detail confirms, once more, how attracted those individuals were to the smoke produced by burnt animal fat.”

One of the first actions taken by Noah at the end of the flood is particularly interesting.

“Noah plants a vineyard, later getting drunk on what he then produced from it.”

Not a small detail.

“This action of planting a vineyard is clearly emphasized in the story, underscoring the importance of that particular cultivation and, by extension, the wine it produced.”

Once safe, the survivor of the flood drinks in abundance, and the Gods rush to him, attracted by the smoke of the sacrifices.

They enthusiastically breathe it in, filling their lungs with that highly coveted smoke – the very same smoke that “soothed” Yahweh.

They breathe in all that smoke – both the Elohim and the Anunna – but they drink as well.

And they drink a lot.

Yahweh, in particular, favors one above all: Shakhar.

“The Hebrew term Shakhar indicates the alcoholic beverage that Yahweh asked to be prepared for him nearly every day. So consumption appeared to be daily.”

Philologically, as we know, the term Shakhar means “to get drunk, to speak nonsense.” That’s the meaning it has in all the biblical passages in which it occurs.”

Shakhar is usually mentioned during those libations that were to accompany sacrifices, the offering of animals whose fat was to be burnt.

Smoke and Shakar: a real party, it would seem.

“The daily amount of Shakhar consumed is difficult to determine,” says Biglino. “The numbers quoted in the Bible, though, suggest roughly 3 to 5 liters per day. It seems pretty clear, then, that ‘God’ consumed vast amounts of these substances.”

So, wine.

Yahweh’s Mesopotamian ‘colleagues’, though, apparently preferred beer.

“Reading the ancient texts,” Biglino summarizes, “highlights the importance that alcoholic beverages had for the so-called divinities. While Yahweh asked for the Shakhar, which could be identified as wine, the Sumerian-Akkadian gods preferably drank beer, brewed using fermented barley.”

There is no doubt, the translator assures us, that these guys were pretty shameless about guzzling down their alcohol.

“These stories, I’d say, tell us about this with a candor that can at times appear rather naïve to us, given that they are about alleged gods. The importance of these alcoholic beverages – wine, in particular – has also been highlighted by recent scientific studies. One of these even affirms that sipping wine stimulates the brain more than listening to classical music or working out math problems.”

Speaking of science, what do we know about the origin of alcoholic beverages?

Biglino draws our attention to an extremely interesting hypothesis: wine and beer (vines and cereals) first appeared in the area of the Adamite’s so-called Eden.

The origin of winemaking is still attributed to the area of the Caucasus, around Georgia, at the foot of the Urartu mountain range, where Mount Ararat is found.

It is said that it was in the Urartu range that Noah’s famous Ark came to rest, leading to the first appearance of vineyards and thus of wine.

But this applies not only to wine. According to the ancient texts, the region of Eden (between the Caucasian and Mesopotamian regions) also saw the apparently sudden and “inexplicable” birth of many foods that would prove to be decisive for the future of humanity and its rapid terrestrial expansion.

A number of studies, Biglino notes, have been published in official scientific journals, studies of remarkable events: genetic mutations so rare

that they are almost “impossible” to find in nature.”

“These genetic variations led to the birth, in the Middle East, of cereals, and in particular of wheat, from which derive the varieties we use today to make flour.”

This phenomenon involved various other parts of the world on all continents.

“In Central and South America, in the same “inexplicable” way, our common potato was developed from a variety that, before these genetic modifications, was inedible.”

According to paleobotanists, the wild forefather of our modern-day potato was, in fact, a very bitter and inedible tuber.

“Science says we will probably never know how things happened. The tales of the ancient people of those territories, though, clearly state that both cereals and potatoes were ‘a gift from the gods’. The Sumerians say that the Anunnaki made cereals literally ‘come down from heaven’, then taught man how to cultivate them.”

Biglino reasons: “It is well known that cereals are not appropriate food for hunters, who accumulate reserves of food by slaughtering prey. But barley, spelt and wheat are easily cultivated, so readily available. They are the ideal diet for individuals who labor continuously every day, thus requiring an equally constant caloric intake.”

And here is another clue: cereals are easy to store.

“All this,” Biglino concludes, “makes the tales of the ancients credible. They tell us that these divinities worked to find nourishment for this new species of workers that they had ‘manufactured’ through genetic engineering.”

Are we back to the non-existent apple?

The hybridization of our species, through the meeting and mating of Eve with and the so-called “snake”?

Human DNA, mixed with the genetic material of beings of much greater longevity.

Are there any more clues in the Bible?

Of course. Methuselah, for example, is said to have died at the legendary age of 969 years.

And his ancestor, Adam, lived nearly 1000 years.

As did Seth, Yared and Noah himself.

“Yes, the Bible clearly states the duration of the lives of these patriarchs, the descendants of Adam. They lived up to nine centuries. This is hardly accepted by official science.”

Biglino, on the other hand, tends to give credence to the Old Testament.

He uses his usual method. Simply “pretend” for a moment, that the Bible can be taken literally, on that chance that it might reveal something decisive.

“In fact, if we accept that those patriarchs had a high level of the genetic material of the Elohim who ‘manufactured’ them, it is all easily explained: the Elohim had a life span of a few millennia.”

And the Bible also tells us that in the Gan Eden there was a specific area where procedures aimed at increasing life expectancy were carried.

“All this becomes understandable and acceptable once we accept that the Elohim were capable of manipulating DNA.”

Even today, the scholar notes, science is experimenting with techniques of genetic manipulation that make it possible for us to prolong life.

“These techniques operate on telomeres, the tips of chromosomes. These chromosomal endings tend to shrink over time, and their shortening determines the ageing of our chromosomes, with the consequent ageing of our cells.”

Mauro Biglino spoke of this in detail in his essay, “Made Human”.

“An action carried out on these telomeres, one aimed at keeping their length intact, would allow chromosomes, and thus cells, to remain young.”

Eternal youth?

“In the future, medicine will increasingly tend to move in this direction. It is believed that it will be possible for us to devise technologies that permit a kind of ‘periodic renewal’ of our genetic material, keeping it young over time.”

Yuval Noah Harari also states this fact in “Homo Deus”. Historian and essayist, Harari is a lecturer at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem, as well as a member of the prestigious Israeli Academy of Sciences and Letters.

It is clear that, if we accept the idea of external genetic manipulation, many things are readily explainable.

The appearance of wheat, the potato, of course, but also of our own origins.

The “missing link” between man and ape.

But didn't we learn in school that Homo sapiens is simply the product of the evolution of the species?

"That's true. Darwinism has accustomed us to thinking that man, understood as sapiens, was formed over millennia through the normal and natural evolutionary process. In fact, though, as research in this field progresses, we are realizing more and more that this is not possible."

Biglino cites Charles Darwin's historian colleague, Alfred Russel Wallace.

"Ten years after the publication of *On the Origin of Species*, Wallace wrote to Darwin that the theory they had developed could not apply to Homo sapiens."

And that is simply a fact.

"Studies and advancements in our knowledge of genetics highlight both the typology and frequency of certain mutations of the human genetic pool, mutations that seem to be rarely observed in nature."

And what do the ancient texts say about all this?

"They tell us that the so-called Gods operated genetically on already existing individuals present on our planet Earth. They modified their most intimate structure, DNA, incorporating their own."

The missing link at last. So the monkey becomes a hominid and then the hominid becomes man?

"If this hypothesis were to be accepted and thus tested, perhaps it would be possible for us to finally understand how Homo sapiens come to be, since these extremely rare mutations, considered 'almost impossible, in nature,' were nearly all related to the process of the formation of our brain."

Biglino speculates that this could shine a light on the "motive" behind the manipulation.

"In effect, the gods wanted workers capable of understanding and carrying out increasingly complex orders."

The true "genesis" of the sapiens is still a very scientifically controversial issue.

"The hypotheses concerning our origin are constantly evolving and changing, and going further and further back in time, even by the tens of thousands of years. Regarding intervention on the part of the gods, says Biglino, one can speculate that they began working at least 300,000 years ago, proceeding with continuous interventions to improve this new species they had "manufactured".

Manufactured. In a laboratory.

“Yes, like Dolly the sheep, cited by Professor Safran to evoke the ‘biblical’ precedents for cloning. Let’s take a look at ourselves, says Mauro Biglino. How are we structured? We have no claws, no fangs, no fur. There is not a single habitat on Earth in which a human being could survive without resorting to the construction of weapons, tools and clothing.

No other animal species on this planet shares these conditions. Homo sapiens have certain characteristics that are typical of genetically modified species that are subsequently domesticated.”

One of these characteristics, explains Biglino, is neoteny: even as adults we continue to have physical traits typical of children. In all other mammals, adults are very different from their cubs.

“Another bit of evidence of manipulation and of the process of domestication is seen in the genetic mutations encountered in human make-up. One example of these is ‘Robertsonian translocation’, identified on two chromosomes of the previous species.”

This ‘translocation’ led to the formation of our genetic material, made up of only 46 chromosomes instead of the previous 48.

“These mutations are quite evident and they concern the color of our skin, the drastic reduction of body hair, the lack of fangs, the absence of claws and the presence of moderately reduced sensory abilities, none of the senses stronger than the others.”

And here is another unusual detail: the excessive growth of our hair.

“With hair that might grow to over a meter in length, how could anyone easily evade a predator in the tangle of the woods, or swim in a river?”

Interesting. Was it not the long hair of women that so enticed the “angels” that St. Paul warned against?

He wasn’t the only one.

Tertullian also remarked on this singular, embarrassing characteristic of the so-called angels.

Could we, by any chance, have been made according to particular tastes?

Whatever the case, there is an evident truth: “We are the animal least suited to planet Earth,” Biglino succinctly states.

“Each living species has its own specific ecological niche to which it is naturally suited. Man, on the other hand, is by nature unsuitable to any of the environments present on the planet. And so he was forced to adapt to all of

them, making for himself a series of ‘technological prostheses’ to compensate for his physio-anatomical shortcomings.”

It’s flawless. This is precisely how it is.

Children of the Stars: The Making of Homo Sapiens

Are we the alien species? Were we really “manufactured”, then introduced into an ecosystem to which we could not easily and naturally adapt?

If so, certain sightings in the sky would be less difficult to explain, especially considering that “celestial chariots” abound in ancient literature. And without even having to bother with the famous Indian Vimana or the Chariot of Ra of the Egyptians.

The Dead Sea Scrolls themselves, discovered by chance in a dozen caves in the West Bank in 1947, just a stone’s throw from Jericho, are packed with flying objects.

“Surprising information about the Cherubs and the ‘celestial chariots’,” says Mauro Biglino, “can be found in Professor Luigi Moraldi’s 1986 edition of the Qumran texts, published by Utet in Turin.”

First of all, “we can read in those texts that in the house of God there is a so-called ‘blessing breeze’ produced by the Cherubim. A continuous “breeze”, but with a peculiarity that we read about precisely where it mentions the innumerable ranks of creatures present, creatures who ‘escort the chariots’.”

“The sound of the breeze of blessing,” it is written, “joins the tumult of their march, and they praise holiness as they retrace their steps.”

There’s more. When they take off, these Cherubs “marvelously rise.” Then, “when they land and stop ... the sound of the exclamations of joy becomes silent and so does the breeze of the divine blessing in all the encampments of God.”

Interesting, isn’t it?

When the cherubs stop, the “breeze” ceases along with the “sound”. And since when has God had “chariots” and encampments?

No surprise, says Biglino, citing Moraldi and the Bible once again.

“In his annotations, the professor writes that in the Hebrew Book of Enoch there is talk of ‘as many as 23 types of divine chariots’. It doesn’t get any clearer than that.”

And what about these encampments?

“The Bible speaks of them in chapter 32 of Genesis. Jacob sees at least two of them and immediately distances himself from them.”

What do we make of that?

“Once again, it is enough to just read exactly what the Old Testament says, with no need to invent a thing.”

We had to wait until the dawn of the third millennium to finally have some official military or academic statements that start to acknowledge the idea of possible “contact” with higher, hyper-technological, possibly non-terrestrial beings.

A certain premise is gaining ground: we are not alone in the cosmos.

A few years ago, the eminent British astrophysicist Steven Hawking reiterated this concept himself. The idea that man is the only inhabitant of the universe is, to his mind, simply ridiculous.

So far so good, or almost.

Things get more complicated as we move on to the next level. Could these hypothetical aliens even have created us? That is, “manufactured” us, just like – according to Genesis – Eve was “constructed” using Adam’s DNA?

Among the various theses attempting to explain the origin and provenance of UFOs are those of ufologists who maintain that, if it could be unequivocally proven that they are of extraterrestrial nature, it would indicate that our species originated with creatures from “elsewhere” who were able to manipulate DNA and “play” with genetics, experimenting with making new species that were intelligent and similar to their “creators.”

The purpose?

The creation of a suitable workforce of intelligent laborers. In the words of Mauro Biglino, “Workers just smart enough to understand their orders and, over time, carry out increasingly complex tasks.”

Sumerian texts provide a rather detailed account of just such a story. The Anunnaki (the Mesopotamian “cousins” of the biblical Elohim) at one point had to deal with a dangerous revolt by their own workers, who were forced to toil in the gold mines. .

The Anunna were afraid, finding themselves besieged and directly threatened by the members of the lower ranks assigned to do the grunt work.

One of them, Enki, the “godfather” of the Sumerian Noah, solved the

problem.

The solution was to replace the Anunna miners with workers “manufactured” by hybridizing the hominids (*Homo erectus*, *Homo habilis*) with their alien DNA.

So, are these our true makers?

One of the most astounding statements regarding this question came in 2017 (by none other than TV 2000, a Catholic broadcaster) from astrophysicist Barbara Negri.

The director of the Italian Space Agency, she is the scientist coordinating the unit of the ISA that deals with exploration and observation of the universe.

“Rather than making surprising discoveries in the space around us,” said Dr. Negr, “we may one day simply realize that we *Homo sapiens* were ‘originated’ by non-terrestrial beings.”

In scientific terms, “We could be, ourselves, a ‘life-forming’ experiment conducted by someone else.”

Life-forming?

Mauro Biglino smiles, leafing through his large books.

He seems to be saying: what did I tell you? Isn’t this exactly what Genesis seems to be talking about? True, the Bible does not comment on the origins of our “makers” and does not say where they came from.

Other galaxies? Did they come down to Earth, leaving a remote cold-light solar system, as Rabbi and Cabalist Arie Ben-Nun claims?

Biglino admits that it is impossible to make a categorical pronouncement on this matter. The Old Testament does not speak specifically of extraterrestrials. The possibly “alien” origin of the Elohim can be reasoned and deduced but not ascertained by documentation.

Of course, the scholar adds, the recent insistence on the topic of extraterrestrials, on the part of the Catholic world, no less, is certainly peculiar.

In recent years, TV 2000 (along with the most important newspapers) has given airtime to people like José Gabriel Funes and Guy Consolmagno.

Both are astrophysicists, as well as Jesuits, who have headed up the powerful Mount Graham, Arizona astronomical observatory, specialized in the study of exobiology, or extraterrestrial life.

“One might wonder,” says Biglino, “what prompted the Society of Jesus to

make such a substantial investment in the Mount Graham observatory.”

Is there something that the Jesuits “know” but that has not yet been officially recognized?

“Equally remarkable,” Biglino adds, “are the explicit statements made by these two Jesuit astrophysicists, as if they wanted to tell us something to prepare us”.

And what did they say?

“Simply put, that an eventual encounter with those they call ‘our brothers from space’ is inevitable, To the point that, if asked, they would not hesitate to baptize them.”

So many statements have been made in this regard, all very similar and concentrated over so few years, that they seem to allude to a possible pronouncement from the authorities, perhaps an imminent one.

Ufologists call this “disclosure”.

The Apocalypse?

“Until a few years ago, I was resigned to the idea of not having enough time to gather incontrovertible proof of the hypotheses I was so passionate about and which I had spent so many years researching, and to which I had dedicated so much study and work. Now, though,” confides Mauro Biglino, “I have the feeling that something unthinkable may finally be at hand: definitive proof that that our history must be completely rewritten, from top to bottom”.

In recent years, in fact, “unauthorized” archaeology has been refuting many tenacious beliefs, leaving them in ruins.

All of a sudden, at least officially, we “discovered” pyramids all over the place. Academia still struggles to accept those in Visoko, in Bosnia. They are enormous and date back about 30,000 years. They appear to be powerful “energy machines” as well. Who could have built them thirty millennia ago?

Mauro Biglino points out another example among many, one that is much closer to us: the Teotihuacan complex, just outside Mexico City.

“With its grandiose pyramid temples, Teotihuacan was one of the largest cities in the ancient world. At its peak, it is estimated that it had 130,000 inhabitants, housed in multi-storey buildings that could accommodate numerous families.”

As usual, the buildings have an astral orientation, seeming to mirror the

stars that make up Orion's Belt.

Who founded that monumental urban center?

And how can the presence of a mineral like mica, be explained? According to experts, it could only have been extracted from mines in Brazil some 3000 miles away? Given today's use of mica in modern technology, we can only ask ourselves if, in the land of the Maya, we are looking at yet more possible evidence of an ancient "technological" religion.

Once more, we seem to hear the Phoenician priest Sanchuniaton's voice of warning: are we sure that these books are really about religion?

Or better: hasn't the religious overlay essentially served the purpose of masking a very different reality, not a spiritual one at all, but rather an perfectly concrete, practical and quotidian one?

It is no coincidence that Biglino cites the very source credited by Eusebius of Caesarea through the Greek Philo.

The spiritual reworking of ancient texts, the scholar reiterates, dates back to 5-400 BC. At that time, in the case of the Jews, the type of relationship with Yahweh changed. Before this, it was essentially a question of obeying the leader's directives, an operational premise for improving the material well-being of the community in the immediate future. Suddenly, the absolute value of obedience changed, the relationship now governed by a system balancing rewards and punishments, as if it were a matter of remaining faithful to principles that were no longer simply physical, but metaphysical as well.

"This spiritualist reinterpretation," explains Biglino, "is analogous to what was happening at the same time in other parts of the world in the 5th century BCE."

A practically planetary phenomenon manifested at the same time, from Palestine to India.

"In Hinduism, for example, there was a spiritualist re-reading of the Vedas, though they increasingly seem to be texts containing very precise historical and scientific knowledge."

Similar course corrections were taking place across Asia, all happening simultaneously.

"In parallel to Hinduism, Buddhism and Jainism were established. There were other forms of thought, from which only Buddhism seems to have

separated.

Buddhist thought, in fact, does not present itself as a religion, strictly speaking, but rather as a way of life.

“In any case, even Buddhism permitted a certain degree of control over people, who isolated themselves from the rest of society or at least lived in a way that essentially discounted rebellion.”

And that is not all.

“At the same time, Lao Tze and Confucius appeared in China.”

Again, these are philosophical systems that, in a way, ultimately aim at the harmonization of the individual, making them socially docile and ready to accept the existential condition they live in.

The new Jewish monotheism, Buddhist “rebirth”, Hindu reincarnation, Jainism’s metempsychosis, Chinese proto-pacifism: all these currents of thought appear practically in the same period.

“This, in fact, permits us to hypothesize the existence of a sort of global management.”

The possible motivation?

Control of the masses, through the “soft power” of persuasion.

“This hypothetical single management,” Biglion reasons, “established this new system of control over populations, who were thus led to believe that their fate did not depend on the their earthly rulers.”

This “litmus test” seems to support the thesis.

“These new forms of social control,” Biglino observes, “proved to be extremely effective, above all because they responded, though in different ways, to the mother of all our anxieties: the fear of death.”

That is certain.

“Religions have established themselves as bearers of truth, often unquestionable, but able to solve the problems of human life, providing explanations for suffering and death”.

In other words, they gave a reason that was sufficient for explaining and justifying the continued presence of evil.

“Giving meaning to these negative aspects of life, which we have difficulty accepting, especially when they appear to be unjustified, is precisely what has allowed these systems of control to govern us effectively for at least 2500 years.”

Another statement that is hard to disagree with.

“No form of dictatorship has ever managed to last so long. The duration of the most despotic forms of government is, in fact, truly ridiculous, compared to the duration of religions.”

According to French philosopher Michel Onfray, the most appropriate way to look at our condition is to consider it a kind of intense form of breeding and raising livestock.

In his essay “Theory of Dictatorship”, Onfray pays homage to Orwell’s prophetic *Animal Farm*. Any revolution, in the end, always leads to a new authoritarian system, in which the new rulers turn out to be just as wicked as those overthrown by the rebels, if not even worse.

For Onfray, we are once again living in a kind of dictatorship. The face of it has changed, but the objective is always the same: to dominate the herds, imposing strict rules on the sheep who still think that they are free.

“The most aggressive rams, displaying greater resistance to human control, were slaughtered first,” observes Yuval Noah Harari in his best-selling book *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humanity*, denouncing a ruthless trend: punish rebels, even with death.

“The same fate was reserved for the leaner and more curious females (shepherds do not look kindly on sheep that tend to wander from the flock).” And so, generation after generation, “the sheep became fatter, more submissive and less enterprising.”

For Harari, it’s a small step from sheep to us.

“Myths and stories accustomed people, almost from birth, to thinking in a certain way, to behaving within certain parameters, to wanting certain things and observing certain rules”.

His thesis?

The abnormal entry of *Sapiens* into the Earth-ecosystem basically laid the foundations for the progressive devastation of this planet.

This is due to two elements: the sudden development of our unusual intelligence and the equally sudden adoption of agriculture.

Notions that “came from the sky,” to put it in Sumerian terms, notions that were then skillfully administered – as a monopoly – by a caste of privileged people who hid the truth behind the mythological projections of our religious stories?

In other words: was there genius in the characters that Sanchuniaton

denounces as highly-skilled impostors?

“Whoever invented religions,” says Biglino, “clearly had a great understanding of the human mind. And he, or they, were able to elaborate a message that made it possible to control people.”

How ?

“Through intermediaries who claimed (and claim) that their power is derived directly from divinities, entities who live in a transcendent world and are thus inaccessible to all of humanity, except through mediators.”

Those mediators, incidentally, have proven to be decisive in our history.

“Of course they have. They are the ones holding power because they are the holders of knowledge.”

Too Quick to Call It the Bible: The Uncertain History of Those Books

“Of the many prejudices forever haunting us Jews, perhaps the worst one is the notion that we are all exceptionally intelligent, as though we were all Einstein.”

This clever line is from Moni Ovadia, an Italian artist of Bulgarian origin. He is self-deprecating and an extraordinary interpreter of the Eastern European Jewish culture that flourished among the people of the diaspora. These people were often forced to live by their wits in poor villages that were regularly looted by the Tsarist police, well before Hitler’s troops.

“Do you recognize us? We are the sheep of the ghetto: shorn for a thousand years, resigned to injury and offence.”

These verses are from “The Song of Martin Fontasch”, which Primo Levi published in his novel *If not now, when?*

“We are the tailors, the copyists and the cantors who withered in the shadow of the Cross.”

These are painful words that allude to a sad historical controversy.

“Let us also pray for the perfidious Jews, so that the God our Lord shall remove the veil from their hearts and they too may recognize Jesus Christ our Lord.”

Thus reads the Roman-Latin missal edited by Edmondo Battisti in 1921. This formula still echoes the ancient accusation of “deicide” with which the Jews have been reproached since the sixth century.

Their crime? Levelling the most famous death sentence of all time, the one pronounced in Jerusalem against the Christian Messiah. Thus the diffidence towards people of the Jewish faith remained in the air until the last century, a diffidence reaffirmed by the Catholic liturgy each year on Good Friday.

The “perfidy” of the Jews was finally abolished from the ceremonial, but only in 1959, by the “Kind Pope”, John XXIII.

Mauro Biglino points out, and not without irony, the oddity of this behavior towards the Jews.

“If it’s true that God had established that the redemption of mankind required the sacrifice of his son, Christians should actually thank, if not ‘sanctify’, the Jews for making the success of that divine plan possible. Without that famous death sentence, there would have been no resurrection and thus no salvation for humanity.”

We might well ask, as Moni Ovadia has, which prejudices, and how many of them, still affect people of Jewish origin.

To complicate the picture even further is the chiaroscuro of politics – past and present –, the lacerating Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and the controversial Zionist drive of the Tel Aviv government. In addition to that, some tend to emphasize the role of powerful lobbies like the American Israel Public Affairs Committee (AIPAC), considered one of the most influential pressure groups in Washington.

The legendary historical falsehood of the “Jewish-Masonic conspiracy” as set out in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion, a document fabricated in 1903 by the Tsar’s police, is eerily having a come-back, thanks to a certain contemporary conspiracy frenzy, the same that blames the Rothschild bankers for all the evils in the world.

Certain dangerous pop-culture poisons are counteracted by the prestige of great Jewish intellectuals from across time: from Marx to Freud, through to Asimov, Kafka and Svevo, Walter Benjamin, Hannah Arendt, Joseph Roth and many others.

And were that not enough, there are the masterpieces of Chagall and Modigliani, the genius of Woody Allen and the fantastic films of Steven Spielberg.

But how familiar is the general public with the troubled history of the Jewish people?

Aside from the horrors of the Holocaust, the common perception of Judaism still seems linked to the Bible, later adopted as the “sacred” book by the Christians.

This is the same Bible that Mauro Biglino strips of the false vestments introduced over centuries by theological interpretation that was often based on translations that were unreliable, if not blatantly artificial.

Many of Biglino's "discoveries" ("which are not 'discoveries' at all") are easily validated by Jewish exegesis.

When asked recently about Biglino's translations, Riccardo Di Segni, Chief Rabbi of the Jewish Community of Rome, reaffirmed that, "Nowhere is it written that the word 'olam' means 'eternity'."

"Jews have always known about some of these things," says Biglino. "Are you wondering why they don't publicly clarify them? I'll answer that with a question: why should they? In the end, the Bible is their book, written by them, in their language, concerning their history."

It is certainly not the Jews' fault if others have adopted that book and manipulated it to establish another religion, to then go so far as to accuse the heirs of the biblical tradition of "deicide".

The Bible, after all, remains the book of the Ruach and the Kavod. The book of Gan Eden and not of the Christian Garden of Eden. A book without any appetizing apples and no tempting snakes. Without even a Red Sea to be crossed miraculously. And above all, without any prophecy that foretells the coming of the Christian Messiah.

The girl Isaiah speaks of is not a virgin and her name is not Mary.

Can we therefore speak of the "theft" of an entire tradition? Artfully deformed to adapt it conveniently and then concoct the creation – from practically nothing – of a new cult practiced by non-Jews?

From afar and with a certain detachment, Mauro Biglino works to observe the "improper" use of the Bible as a book of religion.

And which Bible? The Bible of the Jews or that of the Catholics? That of the Copts or that of the Samaritans?

There has always been this small problem: this very famous collection of ancient texts commonly called "the Bible" is never the same. It has constantly changed, over time but also over space.

"The Bible," Biglino explains, "is composed differently, depending on the current of religious thought of those heading up the effort."

A real mosaic, made of tiles that vary depending on where you are.

"The Christian Bible is composed of the Old Testament and the New Testament. The Old Testament essentially references the text of the Masoretic Bible," the one continuously reworked by the Masoretic Biblicalists of the School of Tiberias until the Middle Ages, "while the New Testament was composed in what was clearly a Christian environment."

The Old Testament of the Christian Bible differs from the Old Testament of the Hebrew Bible above all in the number of books considered canonical, or those that must be believed. The Christian Canon has almost twice as many books as the Hebrew one, and they differ in how they are organized as well.

We are too quick to say simply “the Bible.”

“The Hebrew Canon contains the Torah, what we call the Pentateuch, then the Books of the Prophets and finally the simple Writings.”

The differences are quite significant.

“Take for example the Book of Daniel. For the Christians, it is a prophetic text, while for the Jews it belongs to the simple Writings.”

Then there are the Orthodox Christians.

“In essence, they reference the ‘Version of the 70’, the Bible rewritten in Greek in Egypt in the 3rd century BCE.”

Problem: “The Jews consider this Bible as absolutely apocryphal. They regard the Septuagint as a kind of disaster, a panoply of mistranslations, with many passages arbitrarily introducing spiritual concepts that are absent in the Hebrew text from which it was derived. As for the Coptic Christians, they essentially refer to the Jewish Canon, but with a few important differences. They consider as “true” certain books that are canonical neither for Jews nor for Roman Christians.

The Samaritans are another case. They consider only the first 6 books of the Old Testament to be canonical, and in the Samaritan Bible these 6 books present about 2,000 variants, compared to the same books contained in the Jewish Canon.”

Note here that it is precisely the Samaritans who consider themselves the “Keepers of the Law”, the true Orthodox.

The moral of the story?

“Simple: the Bible we believe to be ‘true’ depends on where we were born. Every believer has someone telling them which books to believe and which they must consider as apocryphal.”

For scholars, many aspects of the Bible remain a kind of puzzle.

For example, when was it actually written?

“It must be said that we do not know exactly when it was written. What we do know is that, in all probability, it was re-written during and after the

Babylonian Captivity.”

According to others, the Old Testament was actually written – not “re-written” – in that period.

“In reality,” says Biglino, “there are also fragments that seem to belong to the eighth century BCE, so dating back to at least a hundred years earlier.”

The truth, it seems, is this: “What we have are copies of copies of other copies. So what we know – as the Israelite exegetes themselves say – is that the Bible we read today is not the original one.”

This is why, about 50 years ago, a special project was undertaken: The Bible Project.

“Its objective is to collect all the texts spread throughout the world, in order to try to reconstruct a Bible that is as close as possible to the original one.”

Are we close to reaching this goal?

Not even remotely.

“It’s estimated that we will need about two centuries to complete this work.”

So there are still 150 years of study to go before we have a text closer to what we can hypothesize was the original version.

In short, the most commonly accepted hypothesis is that Genesis was written during and after the Babylonian exile.

“The ‘origin stories’ are, in fact, copies of previous Sumerian-Akkadian stories, and thus copies of texts that Jews in exile in Babylon re-worked, especially regarding the ‘construction’ of the first Adamites in the Garden of Eden.”

As for the Pentateuch, Biglino continues, it is a composite, “meaning that we are certain that it was written at different times.”

For example, the Book of Leviticus, “although attributed to Moses,” actually “seems to have been written in 600 BC by priests from the kingdom of Israel who traveled down towards the kingdom of Judah after the arrival of the Assyrians.”

So Leviticus was written by them with a precise purpose in mind: “To permit priests to impose their doctrines.

And there was a trick: “Leviticus was surreptitiously placed in the walls of the Temple, to then be ‘discovered’, thus giving them the credit of an antiquity that it did not really possess.”

The motive is clear: “Without that aura of antiquity, the authors would not

have been able to make it credible and acceptable to the people.”

Apart from the priests of Leviticus, who could have had a vested interest in writing the original biblical verses?

“I would say the descendants of the family of Jacob, those we know as the Israelites. They are the ones who intended to safeguard the memory of the events relating to the pact they had established with their Lord, Yahweh, the Elohim to whom they had been entrusted by their commander, Elyon. So it is a book that was intended to preserve the memory of the events associated with one of the many Jewish families.”

And here is another issue: in what language was the Bible originally written?

“If we are to imagine a language other than ancient Hebrew, we must necessarily think of Aramaic, which was essentially the international language of the time, very much like English is today. The earliest evidence of a Hebrew alphabet is believed to be from the 10th century BCE. If the Bible was written later, though, it is possible that in fact it was written in the biblical Hebrew we know today.”

In any case, Biglino confirms, the tracing the composition of biblical texts is very problematic.

“As mentioned earlier, we know that they were written during and after the Babylonian exile, and we know that the oldest texts we possess concern some of the books contained in the documents found in Qumran, half a century ago.”

A remarkably fortunate random find.

“The Qumran texts were found by a shepherd who had been going there with his flock for some time. One day he threw a stone into a cave and heard the sound of a vase breaking.”

No mystery here.

“Not at all. Regarding their importance, it must be said that the Qumran texts are very useful for making comparisons with the Masoretic Bible, the one that was definitively compiled between the 6th and 9th centuries CE.”

These comparisons and cross-examinations, Biglino explains, highlight different writings. The variations that emerged are sometimes important for understanding which version is most likely to be the earliest.

“The Qumran texts belonged to a group of dissidents unhappy with the

central priesthood of Jerusalem, so they must be read in this in mind as well. But the element that makes them particularly significant is the picture they offer us. They are very useful for understanding the origins of Christianity, possibly quite different from those that are traditionally narrated and transmitted.”

Moreover, Biglino adds, the Qumran texts seem to be the most ancient original texts we possess. They appear to date to the 3rd century BCE.

“Regarding the biblical authors in general, tradition attributes single books to more or less precise or identifiable figures. But we cannot be certain, not least because every time the texts were copied, they were partially changed. Just think of the Book of Isaiah or the Pentateuch, which tradition attributes to Moses but which certainly could not have been written by him, since at the time of Moses, the Hebrew language did not even exist. The earliest records of it date back to around the 10th century BCE.”

In the collective imagination, the historical world of the Bible almost seems to live in a space-time bubble, as if it were isolated from the context of the region of the world it is a part of.

Scholars, though, are quite aware, at least in broad terms, of this geographical and social context.

“Given the period of composition that can be hypothesized for the Torah, we must assume that the authors wrote in an Assyrian-Babylonian (especially Babylonian) context. This perhaps also explains the anti-Egyptian sentiment inspiring most of the accounts in the Pentateuch, starting with the description of the so-called slavery in Egypt. Writing while under the rule of the Babylonians meant trying to win their goodwill.”

In fact, Biglino adds, it is also appropriate to consider that at the time of the exodus, the land of Canaan was under Egypt rule. So it is reasonable to assume that the compilation of those texts – which present Egypt as the enemy – were compiled at a later date.

“After the liberation, the period of the ‘Babylonian Captivity’ was also revised and reinterpreted as the infliction of divine punishment. Afterwards, Babylon was also seen as an enemy of the Jewish people.”

Other books are decidedly more recent.

“They were composed in the Hellenistic period, so seem to be influenced by the cultural substratum that was permeating the Middle East at the time.”

The Middle East is a particularly strategic region. Together with the entire Mediterranean basin, it is defined as the cradle of our civilization. Our school books speak of the Sumerians and Hittites, Hyksos, and Phoenicians. And they speak of the Egyptians, Babylonians, Etruscans, Greeks and the Persians. They tell the tales of Rome and Carthage.

And what about the Jewish people? Does history remember them for anything other than for having written the Bible?

“It’s true. The ancient Jews are not remembered for any particular feats of any kind. During the so-called Diaspora, begun long before the Roman conquest of Jerusalem, they spread along the coasts of the Mediterranean. It is very difficult to say how many there were and who the true Israelites are today. Surely the Bible and respect for the ‘Law of the Sabbath’ are the two elements that have continue to characterize the singularity of this group, which in any case considers itself different from all others.”

What is certain, says Biglino, is that most of the so-called Jews present in the world today, especially in Europe, are actually the descendants of the members of the Khazar Empire, which had converted *en masse* to Judaism for reasons of political and economic convenience.

There is no shortage of extreme theses, such as those of Israeli professor Shlomo Sand.

“According to Sand, the real Jews descended from those who lived in Palestine at the time of the Roman conquest, the current Palestinians, and in his books he speaks of a real ‘invention’ of the Jewish people.”

What about the Bible? Could it be used to “date” origin of Jewish lineage?

“For starters, it must be said that the Bible begins with the story of the ‘making’ of the Adamites. They are not the forefathers of the human race, but the first members of the bloodline the Jews say they are descended from.”

Biglino insists on this aspect, which is a decisive one. “It is necessary to specify here that the Bible speaks of the Adamites as a particularly special people, one that had a high percentage of Elohim genetic material. So it seems correct to assume that the Genesis story refers not to the ‘manufacturing’ of mankind as a whole, but only to the production and introduction of that particular lineage into the Gan Eden.”

Something very distant in time. But just how distant?

“The story of Adam can be placed in the 5th millennium BCE. Next we

have the patriarchs, whose long lifespan shouldn't be thought of as added later, but rather considered as having been superimposed. So Adam was probably still alive, roughly speaking, shortly before the time when Noah was 'made'."

Biglino also reminds us that, according to the Talmud, Noah was not Jewish.

"The history of the Jews begins at a much later time, with their eponym called Eber, from whom the Ibrihim derive."

Of course, the true father of the Jews is traditionally considered to be Abraham.

"The events of his life can be placed at around 2000 BCE, the period of the great war that led to the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah."

But did Abraham really exist?

"If he did, it is very likely that Abraham, considering his place of origin, was actually a Sumerian."

Uncertainty seems to reign, though, over everything regarding Abraham.

"According to some Hebrew exegesis, Abraham was never born. The character may have been could have been fabricated in order to have a forefather."

His very name gives us a clue. "It was given to him by the Elohim assigned to him, and it means 'father of a multitude'. This was the first phase in keeping the promise made to him.

However, not everyone is perplexed about the historicity of Abraham.

"No, not everyone. Jewish theology does not doubt his existence. He is considered the historically-established father of the Jewish people."

It is not easy, in any case, to reconstruct a reliable chronology of proto-Jewish events.

After Abraham, Biglino points out, there is a time gap during which the texts talk about the migration to Egypt, a few centuries spent in that land, and later still the exodus led by Moses.

"This event can be placed between 1400 and 1200 BCE. After the exodus, there is the period of the wars of conquest of the land of Canaan, followed by the period of David and Solomon, which may have been around 1000 BCE."

David and Solomon. Did these Jewish rulers, so often presented in epic style, really exist?

“This subject is much debated,” Biglino admits, “because unfortunately, there is not much archaeological evidence that can attest indisputably to the existence of the various kings of Judah and Israel. Some claim to have found traces of Solomon’s great constructions, but even these findings, too, are debunked more often than not.”

What are we to make of all this?

“What is certain is that, if they did indeed exist, David and Solomon ruled over so-called kingdoms that were actually little more than tribal in size. It has been shown that the figure of Solomon was greatly magnified and mythologized, for the purpose of placing a character capable of holding his own against the great rulers of other people at the origins of the kingdom and its dominion over the land of Canaan.”

At some point, those little kingdoms were invaded.

“First the Assyrians conquered the Kingdom of Israel, then the Babylonians took Judah.”

This brings us to the 6th century BCE.

“Now we move on to the Hellenistic period, which followed the conquests of Alexander the Great, and then finally on to the Roman conquest, which put an end to any dreams of independence.”

In the meantime, the Jews had been taking very good care of that record of their history: the Bible.

They had preserved it – or rather, they had written and rewritten it.

It was a set of books that had been continuously copied, modified and reworked. This went on nearly into almost our own times, since it was only in the Middle Ages that the Masoretes introduced the vowels.

And only then did the tetragrammaton “YHWH” become Yahweh.

When the Torah Ended Up in Christians Hands

Cuts, additions, interpolations. Whole books made to disappear, cited but nowhere to be found. And very “plastic” translations, gradually introduced according to the times, the cultural climate and the “political” needs of the moment.

Seen this way, the Old Testament appears to be a sort of dynamic platform, often changing in configuration.

“If we think of the fact that a large part of the Bible was written during the period of 6th century BCE exile in Babylon, we must assume that the manipulation took place in the following centuries.”

The Bible Project itself, says Biglino, is a testament to the extreme instability of the text during the various eras.

“For example, when the Bible was under the control of the Pharisees, the drafters made sure to insert elements implying life after death because they believed in this. The upper echelons of the priesthood, all Sadducees, thought that everything ended with death.”

Other traces of manipulation, Biglino adds, are highlighted by comparison with the Qumran scrolls.

“The text of Isaiah for example, included in the Qumran scrolls, has about 250 variations in the Masoretic text.”

Re-examined in this way, the history of the Bible displays the evolution of a rather flexible set of books. There is nothing particularly strange about this. The exegetes themselves are quite aware of the origin of many of these changes.

“We must keep in mind that every master who ever held a Bible in his hands – to be copied or dictated to his scribes – could in fact have inserted elements of his taste, reflecting his own way of seeing things.”

In the 3rd century BCE, the custodians of the tradition of Jerusalem were horrified by a monumental “ripping apart” of their work: the great manipulation of the Septuagint, the so-called Bible of the Seventy, completely re-written in Greek.

It was a way to finally make the Old Testament “international”, but on one condition: that it be altered so profoundly that it completely changed its appearance.

“The Hebrews who lived in Egypt, and more precisely in Alexandria, had a sort of inferiority complex in the face of the intellectuals and men of Greek culture,” who possessed a series of very important and highly-regarded literary texts. “Professor Michael Satlow points this out, for example, in his book *How the Bible Became Holy*.”

The Iliad and the Odyssey, Hesiod’s Theogony are true cornerstones of our classical culture to this day.

“The drafting of the Bible in Greek,” Biglino reasons, “thus seems to have been carried out to place Jewish culture within Hellenistic culture.”

So the mission was to attempt stand on equal footing with Mediterranean cultural leaders?

“Yes, this was the principal purpose of that draft. While the Bible in Hebrew had to justify the occupation of the land of Canaan, the Greek version needed to provide historical and literary – so, cultural – roots to Jewish thought.

Small proble: to find a place in that cultural climate, dominated by Platonism (which had opened a window to the Unseen) it was necessary to “adjust” the Hebrew text appropriately, even slightly deforming it, in order to open it up to metaphysics.

An invariable pattern seems to be repeating. Those who have exclusive possession of a special kind of knowledge – in this case, the mastery of Hebrew – use it for their own purposes, safe in the knowledge that the operation will be well shielded from any possible controversy.

Thus, the Septuagint in effect inaugurated the practice of producing arbitrary and reckless translations, spiritualizing the text in an effort that would later contaminate the Latin Bible as well. Many Jewish communities, including those in Italy, consider the work done by the Seventy as a kind of disgrace for humanity.

This is where the Kavod (Yahweh’s battle aircraft) becomes “doxa”, a teaching, while the Ruach (spaceship?) magically becomes “pneuma”, or spirit. With the Septuagint translations, free range is given to creative translation like “soul” and “knowledge”, in homage to the hegemonic culture of Hellenism, a landscape dominated by Olympic divinities, literary

mythologies, philosophic Platonism and mystic gnostic spirituality.

Then, as we know, something else happened. The Bible ended up in hands other than Jewish ones.

We are talking about the advent of Christianity, which in a certain sense changed everything.

Or rather, it has changed the perspective from which we re-read the Bible.

Another key passage for those texts was their last translation, this time from Greek into Latin.

“Jerome translated the Bible in Latin on behalf of Pope Damasus in the 4th century CE”, Biglino reminds us.

“Perhaps the most important element of this work was the use of the term ‘Deus’ to translate the Greek ‘Theos’ and the Hebrew ‘Elohim’.”

In the face of a cognitive earthquake of such proportions, the translator turns to the rigor of philology.

“In Hebrew, Elohim is a plural word and consistently indicates a plurality of individuals”.

And Theos?

“Originally the Greek term Theos was in all probability an adjective indicating the qualities of a certain type of individuals.”

These were figures with a special role as monitors or inspectors.

“It was only later that it was rendered a noun and the article was added. Its root refers to the verb meaning ‘the act of moving in space,’ as Plato himself reveals in his dialogue ‘Critias’. But it is also interesting to note its assonance with the Greek verb ‘theao, theaomai, which refers to the act of observing. The term ‘theory’ originally stood for ‘a group of individuals who observe’, a group of guardians, we might say.”

Biglino confirms that this meaning “recalls the plurality of Elohim that the Old Testament talks about.”

It is, then, a long and winding road that leads us to that most important word: God.

This is a crucial juncture. “It is precisely the use of the Latin term Deus that made it possible to insert the concept of the one God, to whom were then attributed the typical theological characteristics of supernaturality, transcendence, omniscience, omnipotence.”

It seems, then, that we are dealing with yet another “fabrication”.

“Exactly. This was the truly colossal manipulation of the substance of the biblical text.”

A historic turning point, the consequences of which we are still living with today?

“This is the manipulation that it made it possible to bring monotheism to Western culture and religious thought.”

Some might say that Homo sapiens have, by nature, always pondered the unseen, imagining the existence of a superior being.

This “natural” religiosity, primarily as an individual sentiment, is a characteristic that anthropologists have explored as well.

These are the great questions: who we are, where do we come from, where do we go? How did we come to be, why are we here? Is it possible that only that which is visible is real?

The ancient divinities who ruled over all peoples were very different, at least according to accounts of the time. Sanchuniaton knew something about this when he denounced the institution of devotional practice as a sort of scam perpetrated by the priestly caste, accusing them of having deliberately developed the very profitable market of the mysterious.

This constituted a kind of transference. The deep meaning and ultimate purpose of existence were no longer the only things shrouded by the inscrutable mists. Now there were also these often angry despotic “alien” (non-human) rulers.

Next phase: choosing one, and only one, of them and transforming him into a singular case, passing from polytheism to henotheism and finally arriving at monotheism.

Immense questions remain unanswered. For example, where does our inclination to assume the existence of a higher dimension come from? Is it an inherent aspect of our being, an ancestral memory of the individual cells we are made of? Or is it just the reflection of a cultural influence, dating back to a few millennia ago?

“Fortunately I don’t deal with that,” Biglino smiles. “As I have often reiterated, I limit myself simply to exploring the biblical text, through a literal re-reading in Hebrew, with an open mind.”

Of course, Mauro Biglino has his own ideas about the emergence of Jewish, then Christian, monotheism. He considers it a blatant mystification,

since it claims to be based on texts in where there is not even a hint of monotheism.

“At most, we can speak of monolatry, where one divinity is chosen among many.”

But here as well it’s all a question of terminology.

“What kind of ‘gods’ were they, roasting the fat of lambs and earlier even that of newborn babies?”

And is it possible that only the “discoverers” of monotheism were intelligent?

“That’s like saying that the Sumerians, the Egyptians, the Phoenicians, the Greeks and the Romans were all simple-minded. They dominated Mesopotamia and the Mediterranean, had immense conquests and achievements, and yet, poor fools, wasted their time worshipping useless stone statuettes. Does that seem possible?”

It’s only logical to accept that they were no mass of mindless idiots. These were the inventors of writing and architecture, of the first laws, of agriculture, of palaces and thermal baths, roads, warships, ports, businesses and great empires. It is unthinkable that all of this was the work of people so clueless that they lived submissively in subjugation to ridiculous superstitions.

Yet this is precisely what the religious vulgate tells us: at a certain point, the cultural superiority of brilliant monotheists emerged.

“In no way negating the possibility of the he really exists,” Biglino explains, “I am forced to note that there is honestly no trace of him in the ancient texts.”

The translator is adamant, steadfast in what represents one of the few certainties he has: the One God isn’t in the Bible.

“I, of course, am full of doubt, and I have no certainties to ‘sell’. Though carefully argued, these are just my hypotheses. But I do know that it’s impossible to translate the term ‘Elohim’ as ‘God’, and that, whatever it may mean (and nobody knows that), we do know that it is plural.”

The problem?

Exegesis is one thing, religion is another. Analysis leads us to verify, while faith offers calls us to believe.

This is, of course, legitimate.

“It’s more than legitimate,” Biglino insists. “I understand people of faith. And I hope that they live their faith intensely, whichever one it may be, if it

makes them happy. I mean it. And it would be a shame if they allowed themselves to be influenced by my work. I repeat: I do not allow myself to discuss God. Ever. I only talk about what I seem to read in the Bible. And to be clear, the God of monotheism does not appear in those verses.”

Fine, but just try and explain that to believers.

“The Old Testament,” Biglino insists, “became important for Christians only after the Gospels were written and, above all, only after the work of Paul of Tarsus. He presented Christ as a figure that harkened back to the Old Testament, but one that had to be interpretationally revised.”

This remains a fundamental point for Biglino. It changed the lens through which the verses of the Bible were interpreted, verses that were to become pillars of theology.

This is a clear case of misrepresentation.

“The Old Testament is really a set of texts exclusively concerning the Jewish people, or better still, the family of Jacob-Israel. If the Old and New Testaments were one day to be separated, the Old Testament would go back to being what it was, and what it should have continued to be.”

Meaning?

“It is a book that tells the story of a family and their relationship with their ruler. And it has nothing to do with humanity, unless understood as a set of individuals and nations that Israel sooner or later will have to deal with, either as a ruler or as a Messiah responsible for the redemption of the entire human race.”

This explains the gulf that continues to separate the Christian and Jewish religions.

“It is no coincidence that Jesus was not recognized as Messiah by the Jews and that his image was re-elaborated in a universalistic version and with a universalistic function. Jews continue to await the coming of the Messiah, and, in fact, they have also re-elaborated this vision, in some cases identifying themselves as the Universal Messiah.”

How could the Jews possibly see the “Mashiach” in the protagonist of the Gospels, who is said to have “changed history”?

For Christians, Jesus is the savior of mankind. The son of God, God born as a man to die as a man: a cruel sacrifice that redemption from the human condition depends on, with the reward of eternal life.

Are there any historical sources?

Here as well, they are completely absent. Only the Gospels, canonical and other, treat these events, and in a very contradictory way at that.

The only certainty is that, at present, the historical existence of Christ is indemonstrable.

There are clues, of course, but no evidence. Yet the introduction of this narrative was so powerful that it led humanity to accept the recalculation its own chronology, counting years “before” and “after” the birth of Christ, an individual who may never even have existed.

“I, though,” says Mauro Biglino, “am among those who think that the person the Gospels talk about actually existed. Then, of course, it’s a matter of understanding who he really was.”

So who was he?

“A Jewish messianic rabbi, one of many at that time.”

His name, to be precise, was Yehoshua ben Youssef. Literally, Joshua son of Joseph.

“The name Joshua was very common at that time. The famous ‘son of Joseph’, or rather of Mary, was renamed Jesus precisely to distinguish him from the other countless Joshua’s.”

The oddities start right with his birth.

“It seems to be out of the ordinary, as we know, in that it was caused by the intervention of a ‘Gavriel’, who operates directly on Mary.”

Biglino quotes here from the Proto-Gospel of James. This text recounts how Joseph, returning from a business trip, finds Mary pregnant and gets very angry.

“Joseph also fears for his own fate. He says that she was entrusted to him as a virgin,” and therefore to be kept as such. “Had someone seduced her? Joseph even speculates that it was someone who had passed himself off as one of those ‘messengers’ who had seduced her. And this helps us to understand the concrete reality of the event.”

In other words, the carpenter Joseph must have been quite clear about the possible role of the “angels”, if not one of the Elohim themselves, in other “prodigious” births, such as that of Noah.

Is it possible to trace the public history of Jesus?

“We can assume that his mission lasted many years, including a long period of silence when returned to his homeland, which was probably not

Nazareth, but Gamala.”

Gamala?

“His family also resided there, a family of Zealots. One of its most important members was Judas the Zealot.”

In his book *Gods and Demigods*, Biglino reports the hypothesis of some scholars that the substitution of Jesus’ place of origin (Nazareth instead of Gamala) may have served the purpose of removing Jesus from what was at the time the political center of anti-Roman resistance, embodied by the Zealots.

A rather disconcerting portrait emerges from that essay, one based on deductions firmly rooted in the vast set of Gospel texts.

Incidentally, Yehoshua ben Youssef never dreamed of founding a cult.

Did he end up on the cross?

Yes, but for sedition. And he wasn’t 33, he was well over 40 (he was probably born 43 years earlier).

Did he want to save humanity?

“Not at all. He was only interested in freeing his own people from imperial domination, but things went badly.”

Death and resurrection?

“No. He was knocked unconscious, probably by mandrake, as recommended by Hippocrates. The ‘soporific sponge’ with which he quenched his thirst a moment before losing consciousness must have been soaked in that special potion, already used by early surgeons as anesthesia. He could thus be lowered from the cross without breaking his legs, which would have cost him his life.”

He was then treated in that alleged tomb with a massive dose of medicine, up to 45 kilos of substances. A very potent aloe and myrrh-based mixture, used not for the dead but for those wounded in battle.

After a few hours (not three days), he was then taken out of the cave by two individuals who, to reach him, had to move the heavy stone that blocked the entrance. Still battered and supported by the two mysterious rescuers, he disappeared in a “cloud” of light, just like the hero Prometheus, as well as Romulus (the founder of Rome, son of Mars and the common mortal Rhea Silvia). All “abducted” by a luminous cloud, just like all the other demigods of antiquity?

And finally, why did he need to move such a massive boulder to get out of

that tomb? Did he not rise again spiritually?

The Jesus of Religion and the One Who Wanted to Redeem the Jews

Do unto others as you would have others do unto you.

Be kind, attentive, friendly. And be sure to be charitable and compassionate.

In a word, loving.

After the Bible, the most widespread historical religious text of all Western Christian literature is the *De Imitatione Christi*.

The author is the mystic Thomas à Kempis, a German monk who lived in the Middle Ages.

True Christians, says Thomas in his *Imitation of Christ*, are recognized by their actions.

Deeds, not words: love one another.

Mauro Biglino unreservedly approves of this high moral message.

“If we all lived each day thinking only of being kind to each other, the problems of the world would be ended. Is there anything more beautiful than the idea of doing only good to one another?”

Where is the catch, then, apart from imperfect human nature, so prone to everyday selfishness?

Perhaps we should ask this question of those who periodically offer to “reset” the world, often proposing cures that are worse than the ailments, the moment the topic of political renewal comes up.

Better to go back to the essence of it all, so purely enunciated at the very beginning: universal love as the ideal objective.

“Absolutely perfect,” says Biglino. “It’s just that I wonder if we really need someone to explain to us that good is better than evil.”

A quick look at a map seems to provide the first answer. There about one and a half billion Christians in the world today.

They believe in the salvific power of love. And they believe that the

(amply archetypical) key to this salvation lies at the heart of the Gospel story: the ability to resurrect and thus be reborn, experiencing a metaphysical taste of the “divine” dimension, generating a change of state of being, to the point of transcending matter.

Mauro Biglino nods, but unfortunately – so to speak – he tends not to stray from his favorite books. This, at any rate, is the role he recognizes as his own.

The action he takes is always the same. He verifies if the so-called Sacred Scriptures actually say what theology would have them say.

This can also be seen with the latest edition of the Catholic Catechism, The scholar offers a detailed counterpoint to it on his YouTube channel “Mauro Biglino Official Channel” again based on the examination of texts cited.

The weak point of this whole story?

Easy: Jesus’ claim of “kinship” with the presumed Old Testament God and the equally hypothetical “mission” of the protagonist of the Gospels, perhaps born in Bethlehem but descended from a family from Gamala rather than from Nazareth.

“To be clear, the Jesus of the Christians is presented as the son of the God of the Old Testament, committed to restoring eternal life to men, erasing their original sin. Now, what can we make of all this, if there has never been any question in the Bible of eternal life, not even before Adam and Eve? Not to mention that there is no mention of original sin in Genesis. What’s more, instead of God we find Yahweh.”

As the police might say, in theory both the “perpetrator” (God) and the “motive” (salvation, through the removal of the non-existent original “stain” disappear.

Are we delirious?

No, the translator assures us. We are only reading what is actually written in those texts, without resorting to the filter of theological interpretations.

Here comes the magic carpet effect again. If you follow the text as written, a journey full of surprises awaits you.

A word of advice: fasten your seat belts and, for just a moment, let go of any prejudices, pre-conceived notions, clichés and commonly-held convictions influenced by tradition.

If we were to go back to Jerusalem in a time machine, we would see three crosses on the outskirts of the city, some forty years after the so-called Year

Zero.

The first cross is a very famous one. Those on each side of it have two thieves nailed on them.

“Also two criminals”, we read in the translated Gospels.

This is an error.

“In Greek, it is clearly written ‘two more’ not ‘also two’. And these were not some petty chicken thieves but *kakourgoi*, a term used for guerrillas, for the anti-Roman political resistance.”

There seems to be the same stench of many other “accommodated” interpretations.

“The deliberately erroneous translation – ‘also’ instead of ‘other’ – indicates clear intent: to sharply separate Jesus from the other two and to conceal his political character as a rebel. If ‘two other outlaws’ were crucified with him, it means he was classified in exactly the same way as they were.”

Once again, Biglino insists on this point. “These are not ‘discoveries’, certainly not mine. They are words that have always been right under our nose.”

Perfectly clear words, then.

“But rather than reading them, we prefer to have them told to us, even in an imprecise or deliberately deformed manner.”

The Greek does not seem to offer any chance of misunderstanding its presentation of the true meaning of the dramatic scene that takes place on Golgotha.

“After resuming his activity, Yehoshua was captured and sentenced for purely political reasons. And when he is crucified, his people manage to prevent his bones from being broken, because in that case they would not have been able to save him”.

Biglino’s reconstruction seems logical.

“By making everyone believe he was dead, after having given him the ‘soporific sponge’ that produced an immediate loss of consciousness, they freed him from the cross and immediately took him to the tomb of Joseph of Arimathea.”

The cave was designed to be a tomb, but in this case it wasn’t.

“Once in the tomb, the survivor of the crucifixion was treated, consisting of a series of balms. They were precisely the ones used to treat those who had been seriously wounded in battle.”

According to this hypothesis, the treatments worked, allowing for the apparent resurrection, or rather, the escape from the tomb.

“As far as the so-called resurrection is concerned,” Biglino says, “here too we must take a cue from one of the apocryphal Gospels, Peter’s.

What does it say there?

“It says that during the night, a light came from the sky and two individuals emerged from that beam of light, rolled away the door of the tomb so they could enter it. Shortly afterwards, they came out with a third person, one who could not stand on his own.”

Is it possible to believe this Gospel of Peter?

That’s a matter of choice. The text shares the same historical sources as all the other Gospels: none.

The same goes for any other event recounted in the Gospels, including the final outcome: the so-called “ascension” into heaven.

“Regarding the ascension of Jesus,” Biglino specifies, “we must say that it was not a voluntary ascension, but a real ‘assumption’ into the sky.”

This can be deduced from the analysis of the text.

“In Greek, all the verbs that speak of this event are in the passive form. So Jesus was literally ‘pulled up’.”

One of the verbs, adds the translator, is even the one that was used to indicate what happens when a person is hoisted up onto a ship.

What can we say?

“This rescue from the cross and the later ascension allow us to hypothesize that Jesus may have begun his mission in a certain way, and then, perhaps, changing the ‘rules of engagement’ during the course of it. So one might speculate that he allowed himself to be condemned, making sure, though, to avoid death. This is probably because, on his father’s side, he may really have been the son of one of the Elohim.”

So did Yehoshua at some point change the direction of his public mission?

In this regard, the story of his encounter with the tempter “Satan” in the desert is particularly instructive.

“The Gospels tell us about the encounter between Jesus and ‘his adversary’, defined in Greek by the word ‘diabolos’ .”

Who could he have been?

“Theology tells us that the encounter consisted of a series of temptations

(of a spiritual or ethical order) that Jesus had to resist before starting his mission.”

However?

“If we ‘pretend’ that Jesus was really the son of a ‘Gavriel’ and therefore had a very real special mission to carry out for his people, then we can safely assume that the Satan who showed up making offers was none other than one of the Elohim, a rival of the one who had sent Jesus to carry out his mission.”

The parallel is perfect. If religion transformed the Old Testament Elohim enemies of Yahweh into the demons Beelzebub and Belfagor, the same theology (but this time in the Gospels) may similarly have made a demon of an El who was an adversary of Yehoshua’s superior.”

More surprises are to be found, Biglino warns us, from the philological analysis of the text of that dialogue.

“Basically, Satan would have said to him, ‘If you come with me, I will give you wealth and power.’”

The reply: “Get thee behind me, Satan!”

So this isn’t what happened?

“Not really,” Biglino explains. “As in reality, some codices convey another concept that sounds more like this: ‘*You* come behind *me!*’”

Not ethics, then, but “politics”? Not the moral rejection of an unacceptable offer, but a kind of diplomatic negotiation?

“In this way, Jesus would have affirmed that he was the one who had a mission to carry out, so if anything, the other Elohim would have had to adapt to that and follow his lead.”

His mission, moreover, during the episode of his baptism in the waters of the Jordan, by another very special figure, John the Baptist.

Who was he?

“John the Baptist turns out to be a cousin of Jesus. His birth is similar to that of Yehoshua. It takes place after the meeting between a ‘Gavriel’ and his mother.”

Both, in fact, come into this world through non-human intervention.

“So It would seem that the two were part of the same plan, a project requiring the birth of both a ‘priestly Messiah’ and a ‘royal’ one.”

The Baptist, in effect, preached conversion, or a change in the way of thinking, a “metanoia”. A change, Biglino clarifies, that was necessary “in anticipation of the final battle that would lead to the liberation of Israel from

the foreign occupier,” the Roman Empire.

“Reading the Gospels,” the scholar continues, “we understand that this was not about an ethical or spiritual conversion, as has been presented to us, but rather of the acceptance of what was about happen.”

John the Baptist isn’t exactly cordial when he calls his interlocutors “a brood of vipers”.

“He was addressing everyone. And in particular, when he spoke about the Pharisees and the representatives of power, he said that they absolutely had to change their attitude. Otherwise, in the course of future events, they would have been killed.”

So what exactly was John doing?

“The people who went to him openly confessed their so-called sins. They declared what they had been able to do for the messianic kingdom, which in those years was greatly anticipated by everyone.”

Re-read in this way, even the baptism in the Jordan completely changes meaning.

“John was effectively looking for fighters. He was selecting them. So in all likelihood, he was looking for them among those who had already committed violent acts, thus demonstrating their ability, their will to fight and their effectiveness in combat.”

In other words, future warriors.

“They were selected and, through baptism, ritually introduced into the group.”

Biglino himself recalls that when we talk about the “final battle” that would take place within that same generation, Jesus actually says that the defeated would be thrown into Gehenna, where they would burn forever.

There is nothing mystical here, either. “Gehenna was the Hinnom Valley, a canyon just outside Jerusalem. The bodies of those condemned to death were thrown into it along with the garbage and waste that was constantly being burned there.”

For Biglino, the real message here becomes immediately evident.

“An army was being prepared to fight the ‘final battle’. And the corpses of the defeated would end up where garbage was burned 24 hours a day.”

What to make of all this?

“By reading the Gospels, it seems one can come to understand some

important concepts.”

The first one concerns Yehoshua’s original ‘kinship’.

“To begin with, in all probability, Jesus was not responsible to the Elohim of the Old Testament. When he invoked the El, he was referring to someone else, because he himself said that no one had ever seen his father. And we know that Yahweh had been seen by many people. This allows us to realize that there is no textual foundation to theology’s claim concerning the existence in the Old Testament of ‘God the Father’ whose son was Jesus.”

Biglino draws our attention once more to the Jewish messianic project, which always predicted that the people of Israel would be definitively redeemed from all servitude and all foreign domination.

“After having tried in vain to incite an insurrection and having fled to his homeland for a while, Jesus came back with a sort of social project for redeeming the poorest from the classes that exploited them.”

A champion for the poor and the oppressed?

“One thing that appears to be certain is that he concerned himself exclusively with the people of Israel. There was absolutely nothing universal about his message.”

In a parallel reading, we can read the motto “love one another” the same way that we interpret the concept of “neighbor” in the Old Testament, from the time of the 613 Commandments. This recommendation is always directed to the members of the clan and never extended to the rest of humanity.

“When he sends out his disciples to spread his message, he himself says to preach only ‘to the sheep of the house of Israel.’”

Humanity as a whole was not part of the plan.

“His mission, moreover, was a typically messianic one, concerning only his nation.”

After his death, Paul of Tarsus began a radical re-working of this figure, revolutionizing him completely.

And he did so, Biglino argues, to make him acceptable to part of Hellenistic Greco-Roman culture.

“St. Paul thus transformed that Jewish messianic rabbi into a master of cosmic significance.”

And his principal gift was immortality?

“As far as eternal life is concerned, it is a concept foreign to the Semitic mentality. Even the Greek terms used to indicate so-called eternity really only

refer to ‘a very long time, the duration of which is unknown’.”

If this really is a case of manipulation, it was certainly marvelously effective.

“Of course. And I will add that Paul of Tarsus may not have been working alone. It is quite possible that he acted on behalf of important Jewish priestly families, those who had given the Temple treasures to the Romans in exchange for a rich and comfortable life in Rome. It is possible that these families, seeing that it would have been impossible to rebuild their Temple and the Jewish religion in Israel, wanted to experiment with this new form of religious thought, effective for keeping the people under control. Christianity would thus turn out to be a religion of Jewish origin.”

Even once the magic carpet has been put away, Mauro Biglino’s words remain. They completely redesign the origins of the Christian adventure as a possibly historical event rooted in the political dynamics of the time.

In all of this, how much information can we obtain from the apocryphal texts discovered at Nag Hammadi in 1945?

“I would say that the information we extracted from the Nag Hammadi literature is of fundamental importance,” says Biglino. “The existence of various Gospels, traced back to various disciples, leads us to believe that there were originally many communities that embraced (or said they embraced) the preaching of Jesus. And each of these claimed to be the only true holder of the truth, with each of these groups maintaining that Jesus had revealed it to the disciple they followed.”

So how are these Dead Sea Scrolls to be read?

“Exactly the same way we read all the canonical gospels. We must necessarily ‘pretend’ that they are true.”

What is the substantive difference between the canonical accounts and the others?

“It lies in the greater concreteness, at least as presented by the three synoptic Gospels. Mark, Matthew and Luke all seem to recount real moments in the life of this preacher. Much of the Nag Hammadi literature, on the other hand, seems to reflect a Gnostic mentality, so probably far from that of a Jewish messianic rabbi of the time, one with very concrete objectives.”

A rabbi, a Jew and a messianist, deeply embedded in the Jewish tradition, until his exit from the scene: that moment where he is “pulled up” into

heaven.

This event has a long tradition, so to speak, in biblical literature.

“It certainly does. Many characters had that experience in the so-called sacred texts. The oldest one, and thus the first, is Enoch. The Bible defines him as ‘one who constantly traveled with the Elohim.’ Literally, he went back and forth with the Elohim until they took him away for good.”

And after Enoch, the prophet Elijah.

“Elijah appears to have been taken away by the Elohim in essentially the same way. The odd thing in this case,” Biglino points out, “is that Elijah and his disciples knew very well that he had to board the Ruach, the chariot of the Elohim, and they accompanied him on the journey (which lasted a few days) to the place where he would be lifted up.”

After his departure, the disciples decided to go and look for him in the surrounding valleys.

“They said they were sure the Ruach would leave him somewhere, but they couldn’t find him.”

The last to disappear into the skies was the leader of the Exodus.

“The Bible tells us that, at a certain point, Moses says that he was not allowed to enter the Promised Land, so he decides to go and die in the land of Moab.”

The Old Testament, Biglino adds, also claims that Moses was in full health when he went to die.

Odd, isn’t it?

“His grave has never been found. No tomb attributed to Moses has ever been the object of veneration, not even on the part of the Israelites.”

This is absurd. “It is difficult to imagine the founder of a people who is not venerated somewhere.”

Some more information concerning the disappearance of Moses is provided by Josephus.

“In his *Jewish Antiquities*, the historian writes that Moses – with his two most faithful associates, Eleazarus and Joshua – goes to the valley of Moab, where a ‘cloud’ arrives and Moses disappears into it.”

A cloud?

“In the Old Testament, ‘cloud’ was one of the terms used to describe the arrival of Yahweh’s Kavod.”

Josephus continues by saying that Moses “was forced to write that he was

dead so that no one would think that he had gone away with the gods.”

Obviously, Biglino points out, this is a very strange tale, almost unbelievable.

“And that’s not all. Let’s think of the moment when Jesus himself experiences the so-called ‘transfiguration’ on Mount Tabor. Whom is he visited by that night?”

Elijah and Moses, who appear very “luminous”.

“Exactly. And these are two people who, according to the Bible, never actually died.”

So Jesus joined them soon after?

“Putting all these events and elements together,” Biglino surmises, “we can perhaps speculate that both Elijah and Moses were taken away by the Elohim.”

But hadn’t they lived in very distant times from these events?

“Precisely. We can assume that the Elohim, with their technology, were able to keep the people who were important to them alive for a very long time.”

Theologians and UFOs: The Alien Next Door

If you don't understand something, try turning it around.

A wise maxim that Shakespeare himself seems to hint at, presenting his Hamlet with a skull in his hand. It is precisely by reflecting on that skull that he confronts the dilemma: to be or not to be? Could being and non-being, by any chance, be two faces of the same coin?

Elijah, Enoch, Moses, Jesus. All stories of characters who seem to leave the Earth, lifted up until they disappeared into the skies. Literally pulled up.

Undead who sometimes come back.

As if Hamlet himself – four centuries before the Theory of Relativity, not to mention Max Planck and the first studies of quantum mechanics – wasn't so sure of the linearity of time.

To be or not to be?

Perhaps there are no answers but only questions, when we contemplate the final destination of biological life, the pure bony nakedness of matter (at least, in its observable portion, which according to physicists is limited to 5% of what surrounds us).

Is there an essential truth that perhaps can only come to light from a distance? Or have certain clues been under our noses this entire time?

This, after all is Biglino's hypothesis. What kind of story would we be faced with if we accepted the biblical account as an authentic and plausible narration, one of many, on the origins of humanity?

And what can we make of, for example, all those "flying chariots" that filled the ancient texts, including the biblical Book of Ezekiel?

Books, but not just books.

Even without considering archaeological findings from other continents, the enormous amount of artistic evidence we have in Christian Europe is enough to prompt doubts and questions.

There are paintings, made centuries ago, that can take your breath away. One of these, "The Miracle of the Snow", dates back to 1428. The artist, Masolino da Panicale, produced it in Rome on the orders of Pope Martin V to

celebrate the foundation of the church of Saint Mary Major. The “snow” falls from a large greyish “cloud” shaped somewhat like a cigar, under which other smaller “clouds” that look like flying saucers are visible.

The work is the visual representation of a strange event witnessed, it is said, by another pontiff, Pope Liberius, in the 4th century. In a dream, Liberius received orders from the “angels” to build a new place of worship on the exact spot where a “miraculous” snowfall would occur.

Art history is full of similar apparently inexplicable references. It appears that the things being described are aircrafts.

The Nuremberg Manifesto is full of flying objects. This is a print by the engraver Hans Glaser depicting an alleged celestial event that was observed in the skies over the German city on April 14, 1561. According to the chronicles of the time, “objects in the shape of a sickle”, but also “red crosses”, “two large cylindrical objects”, “rounded discs” and “red, blue and black spheres” engaged in some kind of combat, which lasted for about an hour. In the end, it is said that several objects crashed to the ground on the outskirts of the city, starting a fire.

Glaser’s description is meticulous: “They flew in rows of three or four, forming squares while some discs flew on their own.”

Something similar seems to have occurred five years later in nearby Basel, Switzerland. On August 7, 1566, the local population witnessed numerous flying objects appearing in the sky and engaging in battle.

The story is described by Samuel Koch in the Basel Flyer, which speaks of “large dark-colored discs.” A dramatic, cinematic representation: “Fumes and fogs, intense heat, gunshots and cannon fire.” Those objects, “so numerous as to obscure the sun,” according to Koch, “flew at great speed, as if they were dancing or fighting.”

Today we would call them UFO sightings.

There is one obvious anomaly: there were no airports at the time. The world was still on horseback and not even the steam engine had been invented yet.

Some point out that humanity made rapid technological progress immediately following the well-known accident at Roswell, a topic that is still controversial and wrapped in a legendary aura.

The story is well known. On July 2, 1947, eyewitnesses swore that they saw a kind of flying saucer in flames crash in the New Mexico countryside.

The military tried to dismiss the story, saying that it was just a trivial balloon that had fallen to the ground.

Thirty years later, Major Jesse Marcel (who had actually exhibited the wreckage of a weather balloon at the time) admitted that the authorities had lied. Interviewed by ufologist Stanton Friedman, a former nuclear physics researcher, Marcel declared that the Air Force version was a lie conceived to cover up the truth and hide what really crashed in Roswell in July '47.

An interesting detail is that shortly afterwards, the US patent office was buried in aeronautical projects.

“I don’t deal in ufology”, Mauro Biglino tells us. “But I must point out that the matter is by no means unknown to some theologians, and even very famous ones.”

Two names stand out: American Barry Downing, a Presbyterian pastor, and German Armin Kreiner, professor of theology at the University of Munich.

Kreiner convincingly dismantles the “ideological negationism” of UFOs, rejecting it as completely inconsistent.

Downing goes even further. In his view, not only do aliens exist, but they have always been here on Earth, and they still rule over us.

Without us being aware of it?

That depends on the point of view. It depends, for example, on how possible it is to evaluate witness accounts like those appearing in the work of Paolo Rumor, repeatedly cited by Biglino.

A single power structure has ruled humanity uninterruptedly for some 12,000 years. It started in the city of Ur, in present-day Iraq. In these Sumerian lands (many millennia before the Sumerian civilization, however), a small elite was given the task of ruling over the world. On whose behalf?

An easy answer, for those who love science fiction.

What if we could “connect the dots”, linking contemporary extraterrestrials and comic book superheroes to the so-called ancient divinities?

This is a perfectly admissible exercise, provided that we don’t claim to be “rummaging” through the pages of the Bible, something that Mauro Biglino himself has been doing for decades, with an irrepressible passion.

“Sometimes,” he confesses, “I feel like I’m dealing with something much bigger than myself.”

A herculean enterprise, in fact. The whole of monotheistic theology purports to be based on the Old Testament.

Biglino likes to cite Schliemann, who was no insider, either. He did not belong to the academic circuit of authorized specialists living in their ivory towers.

He sought the ruins of Troy he had read about in the Iliad and received nothing but mockery. Until he was proven right.

“In this case, the big difference is that no one ever dreamed of founding a religion based on the Homeric epics.”

The Bible had a very different destiny. It is not the text itself that is intrinsically unique, but the cultural, social and political edifice that derived from it.

Are we “harassing” the Bible?

“Not at all. On the contrary, I am trying to restore the Bible’s integrity, with absolute respect for its textuality.”

Exhausting?

Very.

“At a certain point, you just want to throw in the towel. You tell yourself that no one is making you do this.”

Has this happened?

“It has to me, yes. Not long ago, I had a sort of crisis.”

It was an ordinary day. Mauro Biglino was in his study, surrounded by books. Suddenly, it was as if all those books started spinning around him, like a whirlwind, almost crashing down on him.

“I admit that it was difficult to remain resolute in my convictions.”

The only compass was the truth, observable through translation.

“But it was exhausting. A mission like mine is not an easy one. You always have the feeling of violating a forbidden area, revealing what is available, theoretically, to everyone, if they only had the patience to read the texts for what they are, for what they say, without bias or ideological filters.”

When you do that, suddenly doors that seemed destined to remain barred forever, protected by grim guardians, are suddenly opened to you.

And then it is no longer the books that collapse on you, but these apparent truths.

It has happened, it is happening. As though we were on the threshold of a long-awaited and ever closer revelation, the famous “disclosure”.

For former Canadian minister Paul Hellyer, “aliens” physically indistinguishable from humans are even sitting in the benches of the United States Congress.

And the former Russian president, Dmitry Medvedev, has spoken openly about the alien presence in his country.

From Russia to America, the story is always the same, and Biglino himself recalls the historic briefing at the beginning of the 1980s, when the CIA informed Ronald Reagan of the “relations” in progress with extraterrestrials.

The most recent statement on this topic was made by General Haim Eshed, a university lecturer who for thirty years was at the head of the Israeli space program.

“Israel and the United States have been collaborating with aliens for a long time.”

A bombshell interview, granted to the Israeli newspaper Yedioth Ahronoth in 2020, at the beginning of December.

Eshed’s thesis is as follows: humans are allied with other alien groups in what is called the Galactic Federation, which holds bases on Mars.

Of course, says Biglino, Eshed’s statements – regardless of what one might think of them – seem like yet another step in the same direction, gradually getting us used to the idea of our possible cohabitation with non-terrestrial beings.

And what can we make of Trump’s Space Force, a mysterious (space) department of the US military?

The US Vice President, Mike Pence, has announced that Space Force members will be called “guardians”.

This news – although never too precisely detailed – introduces a significant novelty to the Atlantic aerospace arena. Space is no longer the prerogative of civil and scientific missions, as NASA’s have been. Will the cosmos around the Earth be watched over, or even manned, by a new generation of military cosmonauts, perhaps aboard armed spacecrafts?

“If I had told you these things just five years ago,” said General Eshed, “hey probably would have sent me to an asylum or a hospital.”

Now it seems that the situation has changed.

Is there a real possibility of contact – material and non-metaphysical – with the “alien God of the Bible”, to quote Biglino?

In the recent history of our progress, 1976 was a momentous year.

The first commercial supercomputer, designed by Seymour Cray, was launched on the market, while IBM produced the first laser printer, and in California a certain Steve Jobs founded Apple Computer, whose brand – one that was to become legendary – borrowed the most famous apple in history, the fruit from Genesis.

A bit of fake news, as we would call it today, but how far has that apple traveled in the collective imagination?

“It’s a terrible legacy. How much damage has this false idea caused over the centuries? The idea that man was born defective from the very start, marked from birth by a stain that goes back to the very origins of the species.”

Mauro Biglino smiles. He knows full well that in that bite of fruit, reproduced by Apple, there is a brilliant playful wink, almost a Promethean promise. It is an invitation to break the rules in order to gain knowledge.

The year 1976 was important for other conquests as well, conquests in space. On July 6th, the Soviet Union launched the Soyuz 21 spacecraft into orbit, with two astronauts aboard.

Two weeks later, the United States responded with a historic NASA mission: the launch of the Viking I probe to Mars.

According to Haim Eshed, the Red Planet is where American and Israeli astronauts would typically have coffee with their “colleagues” from the Galactic Federation.

All joking aside, ‘76 is also the year that the history-making film *The Man Who Fell to Earth* came out.

The real news was its star, David Bowie.

Science-fiction gave the rockstar the important mission of getting a message out to millions of people.

What message?

Simple: extraterrestrial Thomas Jerome Newton, played by Bowie in Nicolas Roeg’s film, visits an industrial patent specialist. “The man who fell to Earth” shows the clerk revolutionary projects in every field, from electronics to chemistry, photography to music.

Quite clear, right?

Roswell scholars suggest that many of our technological advancements are of alien origin.

And the beauty of all this, says Mauro Biglino, is that no one today is baffled by the sensational statements made by General Eshed.

On one hand, ufologists claim victory. On the other, among those who are barely blinking an eye are, rather unexpectedly, theologians.

Mauro Biglino mentions Reverend Barry Downing, a presbyter and with a degree in physics and author of essays such as “The Bible and flying saucers.”

“Downing has no doubt,” Biglino says. “He writes that the Mosaic religion was founded by the Elohim, who are not ‘God’. They are individuals in flesh and blood, says Downing, and the Bible tells us that they traveled in flying machines.”

There are several texts in which the New York theologian talks about the relationship between UFOs and religion.

“It seems strange to me,” he writes, “that teachers of the Christian religion ignore the presence of UFOs”, which he says appear in the Bible as well. “How can religious leaders ignore all this?”

According to him, the Elohim are still here controlling us, and this belief, Biglino insists, is perfectly in line with the hypothesis of a superior dominant intelligence.

A hidden elite controlling humanity.

Downing is certainly not an isolated case.

“From Hans Küng on,” Biglino states, “there are many theologians who believe in the existence of superior intelligences coming from other worlds.”

One of them is Armin Kreiner, a lecturer at the University of Munich who conducted a very penetrating analysis of the relationship between ufology and the Church.

“Those who are convinced that a crucified man came back to life after three days,” writes Kreiner, “should not turn their nose up too quickly at people who believe in UFOs and extraterrestrials, or who are convinced that they have met them.”

Obviously, there are no certainties here, the theologian admits, but if we ignore the subject of extraterrestrial intelligence altogether, he argues, then we should also put to rest “the entire corpus of theological questions, since we actually do not know if God exists.”

Kreiner himself recognizes that the function of “religious myths” is that of

“propagating an aura of the supernatural, to confer superhuman origin and authority.”

To offer the possibility of salvation, redemption and immortality. “This, essentially, is the function of traditional myths and religions, which even the religions of UFOs are directly connected to.”

It is not surprising, Kreiner adds, that the messages given by UFO religions are multifaceted and contradictory. “In this, the traditional religions of humanity are no different. Their messages also contradict each other.”

For the German theologian, “there is an absolutely decisive point on which the Christian faith and the faith in UFOs are in the same boat. Both depend on the reliability of eyewitnesses.” Kreiner affirms: considering the stories of UFOs as unreliable and those of Jesus as reliable “means using two separate sets of standards.”

He adds, though, that if the problem is analyzed with impartial detachment, it must be conceded that “the existence of abductions by UFOs is a phenomenon much better reported on than any other historical event referred to by Christian tradition (or any other religion)”. Excluding UFOs would mean looking only at what they want to see, like “being blind in one eye.”

But what if we re-open that eye and focus it on the Bible?

How many of those flying objects will we find crowding the Old Testament?

A rhetorical question.

“One can imagine many things,” says Mauro Biglino, “if we ‘pretend’ that the ancient texts, rather than telling fairy tales, recount events that actually took place.”

The light goes out, however, “if we insist on saying that these ancient authors just wrote in code.” And it gets pitch dark if we pretend to “know” that those writers (still unknown) wrote one thing but actually meant another.

“That way, we deprive ourselves of any hope of understanding, of seeing the thread that connects everything in the history of the control of knowledge.”

In his dramatic farewell to the world, the 2016 video of the song “Blackstar” features David Bowie portrayed as an astronaut, but a dead one.

Through the helmet’s visor, a skull appears.

To be or not to be?

A Curious Wisdom, with No Messiah in Sight

People who come and go from the sky?

Ascension seems to have been an experience available to those who had the thrill of a close encounter, perhaps coming across figures whom the Bible calls the Malachim.

Ascension was a “specialty” apparently initiated by the legendary Zarathustra, the Iranian prophet and mystic, who is credited as the founder of Mazdeism, the oldest of the religions still in existence.

An exotic name, Zoroaster, one that suddenly became popular in the West thanks to the great German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche, author of the poetic masterpiece, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*.

When exactly Zoroaster lived is not known, but he has traditionally been placed between the 11th and 7th centuries BCE. New philological analysis and recent archaeological findings, however, have led to various contemporary hypotheses that tend to place him even further back in time. He may have live during the Bronze Age, between the 18th and 15th centuries, in a geographical area stretching from Afghanistan to Turkmenistan.

Another “man who fell to Earth”?

No, on the contrary. According to the Avestā, the sacred book of Zoroastrianism, it was Angra Mainyu – later contracted as Ahriman and interpreted as the “spirit of evil” – who “fell to Earth.”

He was the one responsible for the (impressive but flawed) creation of the material world.

The words of Rabbi Arie Ben-Nun, the great Kabbalist, come to mind. Was life “bottled” in a jar and brought to Earth from remote regions of the universe?

For Mazdeans, however, every human being always retains within himself an original scintilla of AhuraMazda, the “spirit of good”, whom Ahriman broke away from.

Zoroastrian theology is perhaps the first truly traceable one in the history of the last millennia. Its thesis is that, against its better judgment, it was Light

itself that gave birth to Darkness, giving rise to infinite terrestrial contradictions.

It is a religious thought that re-emerged in the Christian Middle Ages, when first the Balkan Bogomils and then the Cathars re-evaluated the idea that something had gone wrong at the very beginning, at the troubled origin of a world dominated by suffering, injustice, disease and death.

Earthly life was no longer seen as an inestimable gift from the One God, but as an arduous challenge imposed by the other divinity, the antagonist of the Light.

Of course, the very idea that, at the origin of everything, there was a divinity other than the loving God of Catholic doctrine was utterly unacceptable. Bogomils and Cathars saw the work of a malevolent entity in the world, an entity whose very actions challenged the alleged omnipotence of the God of monotheism.

The outcome of this dispute was all too predictable. The Cathars were excommunicated and branded as heretics, burned at the stake after having identified the divinity of the Old Testament as the heir of evil Ahriman.

Setting aside the darkest pages of the Christian Middle Ages and the theological speculation of the time, the eastern trace of that first “dualistic” hypothesis remains indelible over time, one that theorizes a “damned creation” that Man is called to emancipate himself from, escaping the despotic dominion of matter. The voice of the Iranian prophet has echoed for perhaps more than 3000 years.

Where had Zarathustra gotten his conviction that life had “fallen to Earth”, and at the initiative of Darkness, no less?

According to Zoroastrian tradition, directly from AhuraMazda.

The encounter with the “spirit of light” took place while 30-year-old Zoroaster was bathing in the waters of the Amu Darya river. Returning to shore, he met a luminous figure who introduced himself as Vohū Manah (Good Thought).

Who was he?

Yet another figure in flesh and blood, it seems, an archangel, the equivalent of the biblical “Gavriel”.

According to Mazdean tradition, Vohū Manah abducted Zarathustra and took him into the sky and into the presence of AhuraMazda.

The purpose of this mission: to instruct this predestined man, telling tell

him to reveal to all people his plan for salvation. The good news? That one day mankind would be freed from this “prison” of earthly suffering.

It is worth noting that the matter was not resolved in a single meeting. The “revelation” required no fewer than seven ascensions. This is a suspicious number, one that those who study symbols would identify as a metaphorical key to indicate so-called enlightenment. Or – sticking to the text – is it once again a question of the literally “extraterrestrial” adventures like those experienced by Elijah, Enoch and probably Moses as well?

The Gospels tell of another ascension, that of the most famous person of the last two millennia.

A plan of salvation is attributed to him as well, similar to the one announced by Zarathustra, but with different reasons for its necessity. For Mazdeans and Cathars, the responsibility for evil is superhuman, attributable to Ahriman. For Christians, however, original sin is all ours (thanks, Adam and Eve!).

Mauro Biglino points out that Christ’s salvific mission was – originally – restricted in scope, limited to his contemporaries. The New Kingdom was to come immediately, within the lifetime of the generation that had heard the stories of the events, which only much later were written down in the Gospels.

“The very first believers,” says the scholar, “passionately invoked the coming of the ‘kingdom of God’, as though were to be established at any moment. And it is precisely because Jesus was taking so long to reappear that at a certain point, Paul of Tarsus – to save the disciples from disappointment – began to elaborate the idea that the kingdom of heaven was no longer to be material and political, but spiritual. A perfect example of manipulation, not supported in any way by verifiable evidence from any source.”

Moreover, that had nothing to do with Jewish messianism. “Yet that was precisely the current of Yehoshua ben Youssef’s preaching, assuming that he really existed.”

Yehoshua, however, was not recognized by the Jews as the Messiah.

“But apparently it was precisely by them that he wanted to be recognized as the one who would free his people (and not humanity as a whole) from foreign domination.”

Jesus? He does not appear in the Old Testament.

“There is one specific element in all of this that really makes us think. The

latest biblical text is the Book of Wisdom, which speaks of ‘salvation’ but does not place it within the story of the Christian Messiah.”

Really?

“Of course. For the Hebrew Bible, the long-awaited salvation is of a completely different kind. This is remarkable if we consider that, according to some exegetes, the Book of Wisdom was written even decades after the events that had taken place in Jerusalem, well after the famous crucifixion and resurrection.”

There is no need for a magic carpet to see where this is leading.

“To begin with,” Biglino says, “the Book of Wisdom is not accepted in the Jewish Canon. It was composed in Greek by a Jewish writer, certainly Hellenized, so strongly influenced by Greek culture.”

It is a book that has been debated for decades, especially in regards to the period of its compilation.

“A great many dates have been proposed, even including statements – from the exegetes themselves, including Vatican scholars – dismissing previously proposed dates.”

In the end, Biglino adds, it is generally said that the Book of Wisdom was written (or finished) even after the death of Jesus Christ, possibly in the 40s or perhaps around 70 CE.

“So far, there is nothing strange, nothing unusual about this,” the scholar from Turin admits. It is well known that the dating of biblical texts continues to be puzzling, with very ancient but often only traditional origins, with clues that reveal them to be more recent compilations.

The Book of Wisdom is no exception to this. According to tradition, it was written by Solomon himself, so around 1000 BCE. However, the Jerusalem Bible, the product of prestigious Dominican exegesis, specifies that the Book of Wisdom cites scripture according to the translation of the Seventy, the Bible written in Greek in Egypt in the third century BCE, so 800 years after Solomon.

The exegesis of the Jerusalem Bible continues, stating that, “some terms used in the Book of Wisdom only come into common use at the time of the emperor Augustus.”

What this means, Biglino underlines, is that at least a part of that text was compiled at the time of Augustus. “So now we are talking about a time

immediately preceding the birth of Christ.”

And that’s not all. In addition to the Augustan traces, “there are various other elements referring to certain things done by Caligula.”

So the calendar gallops ahead, arriving around 40 years after Christ.

“A whole series of references that seem to be historically placeable may, in fact, be evidence of a very late compiling of the Book of Wisdom.”

Apart from the very controversial surrounding the dating of the text, Biglino pauses on another of the Dominican biblical scholars’ observations, according to which a full third of the Book of Wisdom concerns the fundamental event of Israel, the exodus.

It is precisely the exodus that establishes the author of the Book of Wisdom’s faith in a God who will see to salvation.

“So the foundation of the Book of Wisdom – which is the book that by definition ‘knows all things’ – the foundation of the faith itself, trust in future salvation, is placed back in the event of the exodus, where God manifested his intentions and his power.”

So where is the problem?

“The whole of the Old Testament, according to Christian doctrine, acted as a sort of great funnel that starts with Adam and Eve, passes through the revelation to Abraham, then the revelation to the children of Abraham, and finally in the pact with Jacob. Gradually, all this preparation of so-called ‘sacred history’ is nothing other than the journey that inexorably leads to the culmination: the birth – but above all (obviously) the death and resurrection – of Christ.”

So why does the Book of Wisdom not mention this?

Biglino explains that Wisdom is the last book of the Old Testament. For Christians, the whole of the Old Testament, as a narration of the history of salvation, is oriented towards Christ. “And it is oriented above all to that unique event of universal significance, the resurrection of Jesus.”

So here is the question: “Why is it that the Book of Wisdom seems to know nothing of the resurrection? Yet that is exactly what one would expect: 2000 years of preparation, then the Book of Wisdom arrives saying, there we go, finally here we are – the time has come.

Where do we go from here?

In this case, Biglino leans toward the most sensible explanation: that theology later intervened, taking possession of stories that originally had

nothing to do with theology, even resorting to daring acrobatics to support meanings that are technically irreconcilable with the narrative.

In layman's terms, the "salvation" imagined by the drafter of the Book of Wisdom has nothing to do with the idea of universal redemption later preached by Christianity.

"We are not saying that the Book of Wisdom was completed after Christ's death, because this would truly be shocking, as though 'wisdom', which knows everything that has occurred since the origins of the world, in this case, 'did not know' that Christ – the culmination of God's plan for our salvation – had already arrived, died and risen again."

Irreconcilable chronologies, in fact.

"To avoid pointless arguments, let's just say that the Book of Wisdom was written at the time of Augustus, so immediately before the birth of Christ. But even in this case, Biglino observes, we must take note of the fact that the Book of Wisdom makes no mention of the fact that, finally, the long-awaited moment had arrived."

We are talking about an event that, for Christians, had been awaited "at least since the first revelation made to Abraham, two thousand years before Christ."

And this is a fact: Wisdom does not mention the resurrection of Yehoshua at all.

"But it tells us something else, something very interesting."

Biglino quotes the fifth chapter, where it seems to be speaking of Christ and evokes "the wicked" who will appear at the final judgment.

"Then," we read, "the upright will stand up boldly to face those who had oppressed him and had thought so little of his sufferings. ... 'This is the one whom we used to mock, making him the butt of our insults, fools that we were!'"

Then, "His life we regarded as madness, his ending as without honor."

And then: "How has he come to be counted as one of the children of God and to have his lot among the holy ones?"

You've understood correctly: how has he come to be counted as one of the children of God?

"The Book of Wisdom says precisely that. But being counted 'as one of the children of God' does not mean being the only-begotten son of God, the

chosen one. It means being one of the many who have been counted among the children of God, to the point of sharing in the inheritance, sharing his characteristics, along with those of the saints.”

The message is that “This figure is no different from all the other children of God.”

To be clear, “If Wisdom really intended to refer to Yehoshua in those verses, it seems to deny everything that is told about Jesus as the only begotten son, who died and rose from the dead.”

In addition to this, the scholar emphasizes, there is no trace of a resurrection.

“We have a final judgment, which, however, has nothing to do with the resurrection of Christ. That is never mentioned.”

Strange, isn’t it?

“How does the Book of Wisdom fail to know or mention such an important event?”

Yet, concludes Biglino, we must acknowledge that this is the case.

Not only that, but the figure alluded to, “the one whom we used to mock, making him the butt of our insults,” is counted among the children of God – in the plural.

“This reminds me of what one of the Fathers of the Church, St. Justin Martyr, writes in his Apologies.”

Addressing the emperor Antoninus Pius, Justin essentially asks him, “Why are you angry with us Christians?”

Justin maintains that Jesus, “even if he were only an ordinary man, for his wisdom alone he would be worthy to be called the son of God.”

Biglino points out that this is the same “classification” we find in the Book of Wisdom.

We Christians, adds Justin in his message to the Roman emperor, “say nothing new, nothing that is not said about those among you who are called sons of Zeus.”

In the eyes of Antoninus Pius, Justin is equating Jesus to the many other children of the supreme God (Zeus, in this case), exactly as the Book of Wisdom does, where it seems to include Yehoshua “among the children of God.”

Biglino smiles, closing his books for a moment.

“Do you understand? Justin Martyr writes that there is no difference

between Jesus and the other sons of Zeus. Can we simply acknowledge this?"

There are still more oddities that the Book of Wisdom brings to light.

While not included in the Hebrew Canon, this text is in fact treated unusually by the Catholic Canon, which includes it.

The problem?

Its collocation in the sequence of biblical texts.

"Although it is the last written book of the Old Testament, it is not placed at the end of it, and perhaps that is no coincidence".

What sort of "final" book would it be, in fact, without even the hint of the resurrection?

"If Catholics were to carefully read all the books of the Old Testament in chronological order, at the end, right before the Gospels, they would find the Book of Wisdom. And inevitably they would ask themselves where is the annunciation of Jesus Christ? Where is the Jesus Christ who had been awaited for two thousand years? Wouldn't he be here, in the Book of Wisdom, where, however, there is no mention at all of his resurrection?"

Here we have something that seems to be nothing other than a ruse: the anticipation of those verses.

"To people from asking inconvenient questions, the Book of Wisdom was placed elsewhere, several positions back, among the other wisdom books. Perhaps this was specifically to keep doubts from arising, doubts like those I am presenting by telling you the things I am curious about."

And so the Old Testament in the Catholic Bible ends not with Wisdom but with the Book of Malachi.

"Remember the Law of my servant Moses," we read, "to whom at Horeb I prescribed decrees and rulings for all Israel."

Once again, Biglino observes that "precepts and norms are destined for Israel, not for humanity as a whole. This is confirmed to us by the provisions transmitted at Horeb, or Mount Sinai.

"Behold, I shall send you the prophet Elijah before the great and awesome Day of Yahweh comes," Malachi continues. "He will reconcile parents to their children and children to their parents, to forestall my putting the country under the curse of destruction."

This, the scholar notes, is yet another of the many promises and threats that God, or rather Yahweh, made to his people. "The people of Israel are the only

ones he is interested in.”

Thus does the Old Testament take leave of its readers, in a matter between Yahweh and Moses, as the representatives of Israel.

A family affair, then?

It seems to be light years away from the universal nature of the first legendary eschatological “annunciation”, that of Zarathustra.

The liberation announced by Mazdeism can be understood as a sort of reconquering of the spirit, a return to the initial condition of bliss, of “paradise lost”. A happily perfect timelessness, shattered at the origin of history by the irruption of space-time and its merciless laws, so plainly reflected in the brutality of competition for food: the lion tearing apart the gazelle.

For dualistic religious thought, to later re-emerge in the Demiurge of the Gnostics and the Foreign God of the Cathars, living beings are the victims of a temporary imprisonment in matter. They are, in fact, refugees: they all come from a happy pre-existence, one to which they shall all return. In other words, no one is born alone, no one is truly an orphan. And there are no sins to pay for from the outset. If you believe that you come directly from the Heavenly Father, the random stumble into birth in the earthly world can only be seen as a bad accident.

It comes as no surprise, then, that the Cathars, interpreters of a radically overturned theology, were persecuted so harshly and with such zeal by the medieval Catholic Church.

Was Zoroaster, too, there at the remote origin of this thought?

Scholars observe the “heretical” character of Christian figures like Francis of Assisi, who, while in Egypt, came into contact with the Sufis and thus with the East. Among other things, Francis seems to have imported the tradition of the nativity scene to Europe, presenting Egyptian initiation in disguise, where the newborn is none other than the initiate, watched over by the two godparents of the rite, the Ox and the Donkey.

Suggestions and contaminations. Ideas travel, sometimes even spinning back around like whirling Dervishes.

A well-known figure in contemporary inter-religious thought, the Afghan-Italian Gabriele Mandel Khan (a distinguished scholar with more than two hundred essays to his credit), shines light on the long journey of certain ideas, which from the Asian steppes of Amu Darya may have traveled thousands of

kilometers through the centuries, finally conquering the shores of the Mediterranean, where Plato summarized the key concept of his World of Ideas: it is the Invisible that gives birth to the Visible.

In waters, the Bible as revisited by Mauro Biglino is presented in its bare textual nakedness, full of surprising revelations.

Above all is the idea that in this “sacred book”, where Christians see the root of Christ’s divine mission, there is not the slightest trace of spirituality. This, at least, is what can be deduced through a literal reading.

There are strange gods with their “flying chariots”, but no World of Ideas. No eternal life, no pre-existence.

There is not even a hint of anything that refers to a possible, ethereal AhuraMazda. For the Cathars, though, Ahriman probably existed, assuming that the so-called chief deity of the Old Testament, the fearsome Yahweh, was indeed involved in the operation described in Genesis. It was in the “making” of the Adamites that the dualistic heretics saw yet another indication of the origin of what, for them, was the greatest of disasters, our birth in this material world.

The Bible is always explicit, Biglino explains, and it is essentially concerns itself with telling us the story of Israel. More than religion, it deals in ethnography. Religion, if anything, comes later. And it carries with it drastic manipulations, such as those described in 1200 BCE by the Phoenician priest Sanchuniaton.

“On its own, the Bible is clear. It is certain exegetes who render it obscure, exegetes who, in my opinion, do not respect it at all, deforming it through their theological cultural filter.”

This happens even with Malachi, the biblical text that closes the canonical sequence.

“It has always been understood as a name, but that’s not the case.”

Another invention?

In a certain sense, yes. Or rather, yet an “adjustment”. Yet another one.

“Malachi has become a person’s name, but in fact it’s just a functional noun. It indicates a messenger. Textually, ‘my messenger’.”

So they just didn’t like the sound of “Book of My Malach”?

Who knows.

“At a certain point, Malachi was made to become a real person called by that name. But this is a later attribution, and it is not justified.”

Another manipulation.

Not to mention eloquent absentees, such as the resurrection, not even mentioned in the Book of Wisdom, the last – chronologically – of the entire Old Testament.

“In theory, this is the fundamental event of salvation, yet there is no mention of it in these verses.”

From the Hundred Early Christianities to the Dogma of the Immaculate Conception

Is it possible that some believers, to this day, still mistake the Catholic dogma of the Immaculate Conception for Mary's virginal conception of Jesus?

The introduction of this unquestionable "truth of faith" is actually concerned with the alleged original sin. For the Church of Rome, in fact, every human being comes into this world with the stain inherited from Adam and Eve. And only the mother of Christ was exempt from that stain from birth. Because of the Messiah's earthly mission, it is argued, God wanted the Virgin to be "a sinless abode, to keep in her womb in a worthy and perfect state" the son of the one God, made man.

The event alluded to dates back two millennia, while the Marian dogma is quite recent, only proclaimed by Pius IX on December 8, 1854, with the papal bull, *Ineffabilis Deus*.

Before that, the conception of the Madonna was not at all Immaculate.

Four years after the introduction of the dogma, there were reports of the so-called miraculous apparitions of Lourdes. A female figure, of "small dimensions," appeared in a cave to a very young illiterate peasant, Bernadette Soubirous.

She introduced herself, saying, "I am the Immaculate Conception."

Mauro Biglino does not agree. He underlines how, according to historical-journalistic sources, the fourteen-year-old Bernadette always used the Occitan term "aquero" (literally, "that one") to indicate the small figure that had appeared in the cave.

Immaculate Conception?

What timing! The dogma had just been established.

As is well known, the uproar caused by this story pushed young Bernadette

to withdraw to a convent in Nevers, where she died at just 35 years of age.

There is a strong suspicion that her words were appropriately “corrected” to help develop the new Marian devotion.

In the Gospels, Mary of Nazareth (or perhaps of Gamala) is barely mentioned. To see her elevated to the rank of “Mother of God”, we must wait until 431 CE, the year of the Council of Ephesus.

From that moment, a millennium and a half was to pass before Pius IX’s proclamation of the dogma.

Biglino’s position on this is clear. If original sin does not exist in Genesis, what possible need was there for the dogma defined by proclamation of Immaculate Conception?

A number of theologians also concur, for once, with Biglino. At least many of those who in 2016 convened in Milan for a round table that lasted for over four hours concurred with him. In summary, they agreed that original sin as presented to us by doctrine has no foundation in the Bible. According to Dominican exegesis at the French Biblical School of Jerusalem, the Adamites were not expelled from Gan Eden as a punishment but rather as a precaution. So not for having committed any sin but for fear of them becoming a problem over time, difficult to manage, given that they had discovered how to reproduce independently.

But the contemporary admissions of a certain broad-minded theology are one thing, but the traditional strongholds of religious leadership are quite another.

A distracted glance allows us to grasp neither its historical depth nor its character. These are beliefs that have been progressively stratified, to then gradually be formalized. Sometimes we seem to be dealing with sheer fabrications, the so-called afterlife, for example. Dante Alighieri’s poetic work is universally admired, and we take for granted the age-old Catholic theological system it is based on. In fact, though, the origins of one of the three dimensions the Divine Comedy is set in – the central transitory one, Purgatory – are not really all that ancient. The metaphysical place of restorative atonement is an invention of Gregory the Great, dating back to just 593 CE.

“By the way, Orthodox Christians still do not believe in the existence of Purgatory at all,” notes Biglino.

Those who study the history of the Church know very well that celibacy

for priests was introduced by Pope Gregory VII only in 1079.

Veneration of the crucifix itself dates back barely three centuries earlier.

The Cathars despised the cross. They considered it macabre ostentation, almost an exaltation of a terrible torture.

“Would you venerate the rope used to hang your father?” was one of the classic provocations they employed to challenge Catholics.

But did the Cathars, whom scholars today tend to consider full-fledged Christians (albeit heretical ones), really believe that Jesus Christ was, in some way, the son of a superior common “father” found in the Scriptures? Not at all. For them, there was no link between the Nazarene and the Old Testament divinity.

Following the massacres of the Albigensian Crusade at the beginning of the 13th century, the courts of the Holy Inquisition, established as early as 1184 at the Congress of Verona, ensured the extermination of the Cathars. Their dualistic heresy risked spreading throughout Europe and endangering the moral and temporal power of the Vatican.

Catharism frontally attacked the theological paradigm of the Old Testament, rejecting it en bloc.

Which God the Father? Emerging from the biblical verses are both the omnipotent and omniscient Lord of the Catholics, creator of the heavens and the Earth, and the gloomy Foreign God of Ahrimanic ancestry.

For the Cathars, the Heavenly Father was not in the Old Testament at all.

Whose son, then, was Yehoshua ben Youssef?

Heretical speakers in the Middle Ages also often repeated, “If he died on the cross, it means that he was not God,” echoing Bishop Arius’ earlier great heresy, according to which the divine nature of the Son was inferior in substance to that of the Father.

“Christ did not die on the cross at all,” argued the adherents of medieval Docetism (from the Greek “dokein”, meaning “to seem”), which leaned towards a death on Calvary that was only simulated.

These contradictory beliefs testify to two points: the enormous cultural impact of the Christ story in the Euro-Mediterranean context, and the numerous interpretational variations that emerged.

These were much more than mere nuances, surviving well beyond the Edict of Thessalonica of 380 CE, in which the Emperor Theodosius declared Christianity the only legal religion.

Yes, but which Christianity?

Only one: the official one. It had emerged in 325 at the Council of Nicaea, promoted by Constantine. This was the first unequivocal Roman doctrine certified by an Emperor.

And what about the other Christianities?

There were so many. Biglino lists many of them in his essay “Gods and Demigods,” the only one – so far – largely dedicated to the many possible reconstructions of the story of the Jewish messianic rabbi named Yehoshua Ben Youssef.

We are too quick to call him Jesus Christ. We take it for granted that in ancient times, it was certain who he was.

This was not true at all. Early Christians were divided into dozens of sects, often in violent rivalry with each other.

For the Antidicomarianites and the Photinians, for example, Jesus was the natural son of both Joseph and Mary.

The Apollinarians did not believe that Jesus had a human soul. For the Carpocratians, Jesus was a man like us, though one with special powers. For the Monophysites, on the other hand, Christ’s human nature was merely apparent.

All of these are mirror, or even antithetical, positions.

The Nicolaitans flatly denied the divine nature of Jesus, just like the Ebionites, who also dismissed the credibility of his virgin birth.

There were infinite declinations, even ritualistic ones, of a faith that had clearly remained tied for centuries to very early forms of worship.

They did not even all adhere to what would later be considered authentic evangelical ideals. In the year 415, during the embarrassing terrorist ferocity of the anti-pagan climate unleashed by Theodosius, it was Christian Parabalani monks who unhesitatingly slaughtered the philosopher Hypatia, the prestigious (female) director of the neo-Platonic school of Alexandria in Egypt.

The orthodoxy of the Nicene Creed had not yet completely eliminated the many heterodox influences of the earliest Christian congregations, cordially in disagreement on almost everything.

For the Homousians of the first centuries, Father and Son were of the same substance, so the Son was “consubstantial” with the Father.

The followers of a current with an almost identical name, the

Homoiousians, did not agree. Like the followers of Arianism, they maintained that the Son was only “similar” to the Father.

For the Anomians, however, Father and Son were not even similar.

Among the most radical positions was that of the Severian Christians. They rejected the Old Testament and even the resurrection of Christ.

All this may help us understand how religious thought – which would then crystallize through the imposition of dogmas, once it was used as a theological foundation by a stable power structure – actually arises from a real kaleidoscope of beliefs, interpretations and suggestions.

And what about the biography of the protagonist of the Gospels?

It was “fine-tuned”, as we would say today, through complex discussions. These ruminations lasted centuries, in a progressive process of decision-making, including the decision to accept the absolute credibility of the protagonist’s definitive and most striking act: resurrection.

Die and rise again?

“This is still a theological fact,” Mauro Biglino points out, citing the New Catholic Encyclopedia. Jesus of Nazareth “died on the cross, was buried as a rebel under Pontius Pilate and then manifested himself as the Lord of Creation.”

But, Biglino points out, the encyclopedia goes on to state that “the hypothesis itself is historically indemonstrable.” It reads: “The context, that is the crucifixion of Jesus for reasons of sedition, is the object of historical evaluation.” The text concludes: “The stories of the resurrection, therefore, do not contain elements that can be the subject of historical research, as they are theological declarations.”

What Biglino is leafing through is the edition of the Catholic Encyclopedia published in Detroit in 2006.

It is as though we were listening to the echoes of the controversies of the very first Christians.

Was there really a resurrection?

Yes, but on the condition that it be considered a purely theological truth and not a historical one.

Biglino is certainly among those who seem to appreciate this frankness. He does not believe in the resurrection (he remembers the apocryphal texts that cite the “alien” rescue of the wounded alleged Messiah, later taken out of the

cave). Neither does he believe that Yehoshua actually died on that cross, assuming he really existed at all.

In any case, approximately when was the crucifixion supposed to have taken place? Even before that, is it at least hypothetically possible to retrace the life of the historical Jesus?

“Quoting the conclusions accepted by all biblical scholars,” Biglino summarizes, “it is believed that Jesus was born between 7 and 6 BCE”.

This is also confirmed by Cathopedia, the Catholic encyclopedia published on the web.

“Assuming the validity of these references,” we read, “most biblical scholars place his birth after the census of 8 BCE and before the death of Herod the Great in 4 BCE, with a greater preference for 7-6 BCE.”

“I know,” Biglino admits. “It seems odd to say that Christ was born “before Christ”, but we’ve got to recognize the purely conventional nature of the date, though it does have historical elements that cannot be ignored.”

One of these, the scholar emphasizes, is the period of his baptism.

The event would have taken place around the 26CE because the Gospel of John tells us about “the first Passover after baptism.” During that particular first Passover, Jesus was the protagonist of the well-known expulsion of the merchants from the Temple.

In John’s Gospel, Biglino adds, there is a precise reference. It says that when Yehoshua lashed out at the merchants, the Jews claimed that the construction of the Temple had taken 46 years.

“Since we know from historical data (and from Josephus) that we can date the beginning of the construction of the Temple to 20 BCE, if we add 46 years we arrive at 26 CE. If we include the first and last years, let’s say that it could be 26-27 CE. So it is in this time frame that the baptism of Jesus by John the Baptist and the expulsion of the merchants are to be placed.”

Biglino confirms that, in his opinion, what John the Baptist, along with Yehoshua, was actually doing was recruiting.

“John the Baptist was putting together an army of fighters. Baptism was the rite John used to mark the newcomers’ inclusion in his group.”

In the Gospel passage, the scholar points out, the expression “exomologoumenoi” is used. This, he explains, indicates that those who joined Jesus’ cousin on the banks of the Jordan did not do so to confess their sins, but to “celebrate” them, proclaiming the acts of violence that they had

been able to commit.

“So these were people who could truly guarantee that they were fit to join an army. The training of fighters was underway, fighters who would bring about the liberation of Israel from the foreign yoke.”

Reading and listening to Biglino is like throwing open a window on a neglected courtyard, stacked up with household goods that no one had ever thought of checking.

What is all this? Who left all this stuff in the corner? Are we sure we know what's in all of these boxes?

Let's open them and have a look. What do they contain?

Biglino did this, above all, with the Old Testament, discovering an awful lot of unsettling memories, shedding light on a geography that, if taken as historical, is extraordinarily concrete and consistent.

You are mistaken, some will say. Don't you know that the Bible is an essentially cabalistic construction containing arcane keys to the great secret of life?

All right, Biglino responds, nothing to object to. But he wonders why it is so distressing if, in parallel, we also engage in a literal re-reading of those ancient verses transcribed in Hebrew and continuously modified? They seem to photograph an era in a perfectly credible linear way when they describe a portion of humanity struggling under highly-placed and often deeply-feared beings, capable of incinerating entire cities from the sky.

It is impossible to speak of God, says the translator, in the face of the numerous Elohim, so similar to the Indian Devas and the Greco-Roman Theoi.

More than divine entities, these are rulers, higher beings who are powerful and long-lived, but not immortal, and technologically highly evolved. Are they guardians of the human herd that they had genetically “manufactured”?

One of them, Yahweh, gets assigned a single bloodline, the line of Jacob, who then takes care of keeping track of events. So over the course of a few centuries, various members of that family the books that will later become the Old Testament.

One day the Bible gets translated into Greek and much later into Latin. The Hellenic world and then, above all, Rome took possession of it, almost relegating the Jews to that old courtyard cluttered with dusty antiques.

It's as though those texts had changed hands, no longer used to record the collective memory of a small Middle Eastern people (or, if you prefer, to allow initiates to pass on encrypted esoteric codes), but to serve as the foundation for a brand new more Western type of religion. It is a pyramid that, to hold validity for the faithful, seems to require very old texts, whose very age might be presented as a kind of reliable passport, as though it dated back to the dawn of time.

What if this were not the case?

What if Mauro Biglino is right? What if it were grossly inappropriate to lay religious propositions onto what is essentially a kind of history book, one that is loaded with meticulously narrated massacres, wars and atrocities, even when describing the embarrassing habits, including culinary ones, of the alleged One God?

Biglino takes the same path in discussing – though only briefly – the New Testament, which according to Christians documents events that changed the world.

And did they? They certainly did.

The extent of the symbolic power contained in the story of the Son of God is literally incalculable. Someone who sacrificed himself by becoming a man, only to be killed and finally to rise again. In the name of that symbol, events of immense importance, both personal and historical, have taken place over the last millennium. Acts of heroism, of conversions.

The key? It's theological: the new religion promised eternal life to all humanity, no longer just to small groups of the faithful, on an ethnic or national basis.

The Christ of religion has been an inexhaustible source of inspiration for those who go in search of the divine, perhaps even making the ultimate sacrifice for a noble cause.

In parallel, of course, we must also consider what might at first seem like side effects related to the adoption of the Cross by the powers-that-be. The conquest of the Americas alone, according to historians, cost tens of millions of lives.

Even the Gospels, which the Christian clergy “glued” to the Hebrew Bible to create continuity that suggested a direct link, have the same problems as the Old Testament scrolls: uncertain dating and the absence of any reliable sources.

Biglino evaluates the Gospel texts in exactly the same way as he does with the Old Testament: with the technical detachment required by a doubt-based scientific approach. Until we begin to see a hypothesis arise: what if a solid link really does exist between the Old and the New Testament? According to Biglino, this idea holds, but on the condition that the events of the Gospels be stripped of the religious, spiritual and sagacious connotations with which they abound, and taking into account the fact that they were written up to 150 years after the events described.

While the intent of the evangelists (both canonical and apocryphal) is very clear, fragments of a single – though contradictory – narrative hypothesis remain visible in the background, concentrated on the actions and words of one great protagonist.

Accepting that he actually existed, who was he, really?

If we apply the Biglino method to the New Testament writings as well, the mirror might reflect an image that is different from the traditional icon. But the portrait – as in the Old Testament – seems to be consistent.

In other words, what if that very special individual, theoretically the son of a woman and an El (or a Malach), had “simply” been charged with leading a reform project in the Middle East? It’s not even talking about the entire Middle East. In several passages, in fact, Yehoshua reiterates that his mission is addressed only “to the sheep of the house of Israel.”

Here the link between him and his hypothetical predecessors is quite clear. This not a question of redeeming the whole of humanity, but – once again – just the line of Judah.

Is that possible?

Yes, says Biglino. If we “pretend” that the text (Greek, in this case) is to be considered in a literal textual reading rather than symbolic one, we can discover things that are statements of fact.

“Of course, the facts that emerge are not at all comfortable. They do not correspond to the image that tradition has built up over time.”

So what do these boxes stacked in that forgotten courtyard really contain?

Lots of photographs, and not necessarily blurry ones.

A baptism that looks nothing like a peaceful consecration.

A man who does not go up to the gallows at 33, but much later.

A leader who, when chasing the merchants out of the Temple, has no intention of condemning the business world – and much less the alleged

desecration of a sacred place – given that the Temple was the politico-financial and commercial center of the time.

Does the clear profile of a political leader also emerge? One recruiting warriors, like his cousin John the Baptist?

The True Face of Jesus: an Anti-Roman Rebel Leader

I will make you fishers of men.

Raise your hand if you have never felt some excitement reading or hearing these words.

Words that evoke the supreme majesty of the highest inspiration: a spiritual mission.

The power to dare the impossible.

Men can be “fished”, chosen, saved and elevated into a special group of conscious individuals, and armed with courage and wisdom.

These are the most effective virtues for facing the darkness of the world and proceeding confidently towards the light, for guiding humanity by good example, dedication to others and the generosity of unconditional love.

A truly universal image. “Love that moves the sun and the other stars,” in the words of Dante, which seem to anticipate Giordano Bruno’s cosmic-spiritual vision.

To tell the truth, Yehoshua ben Youssef, the “fisher of men”, does not seem to occupy a prominent place in the philosophical framework of the Italian philosopher.

Yet this passage in the Gospel is very clear: this kind of act can only be performed by the one who first imagined it, the Messiah, whom Christians regard as the originator of their religion, which they describe as having been “revealed”.

And what does Mauro Biglino think of this? What did he discover, rummaging around in that courtyard among those dusty boxes?

“If we imagine that scene with the fishermen at the Sea of Galilee, we can see that it is believable only with the caveat that those men among the boats were old acquaintances of his. This is the only way that we can we imagine giving up everything, home and family, to follow someone. They knew very well who he was because they were already been part of his group.”

For example, they could have been the same people who had joined John the Baptist.

So much for poetry? No more charismatic character endowed with superpowers who, at his mere appearance, is able to instantly convert practically anyone?

Once again, Biglino advises us to “just pretend for a moment”, and for the sake of argument accept that the events narrated are based on things that really happened.

Do they appear to be coherent?

Probably, if we line them up. And they seem to untangle a very “political” story, reflecting very little religion.

“I repeat, this is a hypothesis I developed by stripping this figure of the faith-based contents that tradition has attributed to him. If we consider a few essential events of his public life, we end up with a whole different story. After chasing the merchants out of the Temple, he disappears. Then, following the death of John the Baptist, he re-enters the scene right with the recruitment of fishermen. This story’s deep meaning is regularly misunderstood, in my opinion, just like the story of the clash in the Temple.”

What do you mean?

“It was perfectly normal for the Temple of Jerusalem to be the epicenter of financial exchanges and trade. It had always been this way. The Temple was, in effect, the seat of state authority of the time”.

And wasn’t it, in fact, precisely this aspect that the “revolutionary” Jesus contested?

“Not exactly. On this occasion, he took it out on the weakest people.”

What do you mean?

“He was furious with people working as money changers in the Temple. Or, for example, with those who sold doves and other small animals, which people – by law – had to sacrifice to the Temple, to God and the priests. These were very strict laws, taxes imposed by the priestly caste to the profit of the Temple.”

From the Gospels we know that the episode took place during the Jewish Passover, the first Passover after being baptized in the Jordan.

“During Passover,” Biglino explains, “all Jews had to go to the Temple of Jerusalem to make sacrifices. There were some that came from very far away, so rather than bringing the animals to be sacrificed with them and dragging them along for days, it was more convenient to buy them there.”

This explains the presence of the merchants in the Temple. It was all

perfectly appropriate for the rituals of the Jewish religion.

Stalls full of animals, all right. But what about those tables of money changers?

“Since it foreign currency was not permitted to enter the sacred building, it had to be exchanged for Temple coin. So, in that great mechanism of fiscal harassment that the people of Israel were subjected to, the money changers were the weak link. Without them, the poorest would never have been able to make their sacrifices. They would not have been able to exchange their money and enter the Temple to buy a dove and sacrifice it to fulfil their duty.”

If this passage is misunderstood, Biglino explains, it’s easy to get the whole thing completely wrong.

So what does Jesus do? Does he get angry with those who made these unfair laws? Does he blame those who had imposed the heavy tax burdens? No. He gets angry with those who made it possible for the poorest among the people to fulfil their religious obligations.”

Mauro Biglino considers this episode “very strange,” a political faux pas, as we would say today.

“By acting this way, it is quite possible that Yehoshua was hoping to gain the favor of the people. But the people did not follow him, and the Romans themselves didn’t pay any. They did not stop him, as though his actions were of no importance whatsoever.”

A great disappointment?

Probably, if it had really been intended to incite the people to rebel.

Nothing that strange for a messianic rabbi. It’s just that, this time, the people did not revolt.

What if Yehoshua had continued in this vein? Would he have ended up in the crosshairs and end up being arrested?

Everything, Biglino argues, leans in favor of this possible explanation. So out of prudence, the aspiring Jewish Messiah decided to change location for the time being and withdraw to Galilee.

“According to certain calculations, his absence from Jerusalem may have lasted for about ten years. He returned ‘to the field’ only after the death of John the Baptist.”

According to Biglino, Yehoshua would then have changed his strategy, “perhaps by changing the rules of engagement,” modifying the nature of his

mission, which initially had to be typically messianic in the strictly Hebrew sense.

So a new strategy and new objectives?

“This would also explain why those who had sent him – the Elohim he worked for – allowed him to be condemned but kept him from dying.”

An interesting thesis. Could Jesus at some point have acted on his own, deviating from the original project that, in the scriptures, had started with the “Gavriel’s” intervention with Mary?

The rebel leader then reappears on the shores of the Sea of Galilee.

“Walking along the Sea of Galilee,” we read in the fourth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, “Jesus saw the two brothers Simon, called Peter, and his brother Andrew. They were casting their nets into the sea because they were fishermen.”

And then, that legendary phrase.

“He said to them, ‘Follow me and I will make you fishers of men.’ They instantly abandoned their nets and followed him.”

And they were not the only ones.

“Going on from there, he saw another pair of brothers, James son of Zebedee and his brother John; they were in their boat with their father Zebedee, mending their nets, and he called them. And at once they left their nets and followed him.”

Doesn’t this look like a scene from an epic movie?

It certainly does, but this is not a movie. It’s the Gospel.

Hidden metaphysical messages?

Mauro Biglino proposes that we accept this entire story as reliable. And it is at this point that some rather obvious questions arise.

“Let’s try to put ourselves in the shoes of these fathers with families. They are on a boat and doing the job that the lives of their families, wives and children all depend on. At some point they see someone whom, we are told, they know absolutely nothing about. And he tells them, ‘I will make you fishers of men.’ And these people immediately, instantly, abandon everything – home and work, spouses and children – to follow this stranger. Can you imagine them running to tell their families, ‘Sorry, I found someone who told me that he will make me a fisher of men, so I’m go with him and you guys can take care of yourselves’?”

It doesn't make sense.

“Of course it doesn't make sense because in this seems to have been a second call. The Galilean fishermen must have known Jesus quite well. They had already been on a mission with him. Then when the rabbi stopped his activity, they returned to their trade.”

The tragic end of John the Baptist appears to have changed everything.

“Yes. This is when Jesus said, ‘The time has come to act, now it's my turn.’ And remember that both he and his cousin were children of the intervention of a ‘Gabriel’, a figure exercising power on behalf of one of the Elohim, with a specific mission to accomplish.”

Two Messiahs: the religious one and the royal one.

“When Jesus learns that John the Baptist is dead, he knows that there is no more time to waste. He returns to summon his people, who promptly answer his call: ‘Here we are.’ Read this way, that lightning-fast response is understandable, as is the call itself. The time had come to fight and establish the ‘Kingdom of God’.”

This, Biglino insists, explains why people immediately joined him. It is a much more credible reason than the alleged ‘supernatural’ charisma of a leader making up for the glaring failure of his first move (against the Temple merchants), when he had certainly not shown himself to be infallible.

It's almost like we can picture Biglino at work in that courtyard full of dusty objects.

They appear to contain neither mysteries nor secrets, but rather some very precise facts. And quite credible ones at that, if stripped of their traditional garments.

The alleged Son of the alleged Father God of the Old Testament?

Who knows? Maybe.

His prodigious birth still bears the stamp of “Gavriel”, the archangel of the annunciation. The script is similar to that of the family of his cousin, John the Baptist. In that case, the Ghever-El first informed Zacharias, the husband of Elizabeth, mother of John.

All things, incidentally, that happened in the Old Testament as well.

Not only that, Biglino insists, but these strange “hybrid” origins echo those of the demigods and heroes of the Homeric tales.

It is as that though that old courtyard cluttered with artefacts were full of

inexhaustible surprises. Plausible stories emerge, such as the one (very likely actually, if re-read through Biglino's filter) of the fishers of men, or the (equally as convincing) story of the clash in the Temple between the small merchants and the money changers.

Those whose faith is based on the Gospels obviously has no need of any of this information. They are convinced of having found in those pages what they need.

Others think differently. They say that the stories of the so-called Sacred Scriptures are essentially fairy tales, wonderful tales with the principal function of conveying hidden messages, through complex metaphorical constructions.

The innumerable lovers of allegory see Jesus Christ simply as a sublime symbolic masterpiece, created to suggest to humanity the secret of his true essence, visible and invisible. The supreme mystery, the invincible power of love that conquers every possible fear, including the fear of death, experiencing – in life – true resurrection, eternal rebirth, the triumph of the Logos that transcends matter through even the most painful labors of earthly experience.

Mauro Biglino nods.

“I think I know all the interpretative keys that tradition has offered quite well, both exoteric, intended for all, and esoteric – for the few – including the many declinations of the Kabbalah.”

So why does the author persist in lingering among those old boxes, amid scrolls and papyri?

The answer is obvious: because of the oldest books among them. Those of the Old Testament.

In studying them, he has discovered the possible existence of a parallel world, which in reality is the most concrete. A world that, after a while, strangely enough, sounds familiar.

Even Indiana Jones – in the movie of course – eventually finds the mythical Ark of the Covenant.

A metaphysical pact between the heart of man and the heart of God?

Well, not exactly: it was a trunk.

Covered in gold, to be sure, but still a trunk. Equipped with special energy powers, just like the one described in the Bible.

The Bible: the “book of books”, recounting the exploits of the Elohim and

their leader Elyon. Including experiments on humans and special “procedures” like the one at the origin of Noah’s birth.

Professor Henry Walton Jones, the adventurous archaeologist imagined by George Lucas, is perfectly familiar with antiquities and mythologies, symbols and signs, of apparently mysterious meanings.

What he’s interested in, though, is finding some kind of treasure. So he pays attention more to maps than to philosophies.

Speaking of maps, is it really so absurd to try and historically trace this hypothetical Jewish messianic rabbi, later adopted and adored by Christians as an actual divinity?

What a question! That is the least that can be expected from those who have flown over the Old Testament aboard Biglino’s magic carpet.

In short, once he had disappeared from the public scene following the failed popular uprising in the Temple of Jerusalem, Yehoshua ben Youssef retraces his steps, starting by recruiting fishermen he knew, immediately after the death of his cousin John the Baptist.

Why was the Jordanian man killed?

“We are told that he died because of a woman, Salome, who performed a particularly erotic dance for the sovereign, Herod Antipas, son of Herod the Great. Once seduced, Herod told her, ‘Ask me for whatever you want.’ And she demanded the head of John the Baptist.”

Does all of this make sense to you?

“To arrive at a logical, credible explanation, we need to read Josephus, who in fact tells us something quite different.”

Were the ‘perfidious’ Salome’s skills of seduction perhaps exaggerated to hide a possible political reason for it?

You guessed it, but at this point, the answer was easy to deduce.

“When others joined them – for they became highly agitated by his preaching – Herod feared his influence on people to be so great that it might lead to some uprising.”

Josephus himself says this when speaking about John the Baptist in his Jewish Antiquities.

“For they seemed to be doing everything according to his advice,” the Jewish-Roman historian writes.

Nothing whatsoever to do with the whims of the beautiful Salome.

“Therefore Herod decided that it would be much better to take the initiative to have him killed before he was able to cause some revolution, than to get involved in matters once the revolt had begun, and then be sorry.”

The sovereign decision’s is easy to understand: kill John the Baptist, feared as a potential rioter. A man considered so dangerous that they dragged in chains to the fortress at Machaerus and executed him without further ado.

John the Baptist’s fate, Biglino states, indirectly illuminates the political nature of the mission of his alter ego and cousin, Yehoshua.

But the death of John, adds the scholar, is fundamental for another reason as well. It provides us with one of very few historical indications, allowing us to identify a framework for the story of Jesus.

The source is the same: Josephus.

Herod had taken the daughter of Aretha, king of Petra, as his wife. Then during a trip to Rome, at some point, he decided to repudiate her. Aretha’s daughter then took refuge with her father, who obviously decided to react by waging war on Herod. A battle ensued, and Herod was defeated.

“This is an established historical fact and it occurred during those very years.”

What of the connection with John the Baptist?

Josephus, once again, provides us with the story.

“Some Jews,” he writes, “believed that the army of Herod was destroyed by God,

who quite rightly avenged the fate of John, surnamed the Baptist.”

And that is not all, Biglino notes. There is another bit of historical evidence.

“Herod decided to take revenge and turned for help to the Roman emperor. Tiberius accepted and approved preparations for a military campaign against Aretha, but the operation was interrupted by the death of Tiberius.”

It is the year 37 CE.

“Going backwards, it is easy to reconstruct a reliable chronology.”

John the Baptist is killed between the year 35 and 36 CE. Soon after that, Herod is defeated by Aretha and the Jews attribute his defeat to the assassination of John the Baptist. Herod screams for revenge but the Roman Emperor dies.

Yehoshua must have returned to action the year before that, in 36 CE, close to the first Passover. It was in those days that he was captured and put

to death.

“So we are in the year 36 CE. If we consider that even Catholic sources say that he must have been born either in 7 or 6 BCE, it is evident that, 36 years later, when he ended up on the cross, he must have been around 42 or 43 years old, not 33, as attributed to him by religious tradition. With all due respect to lovers of esoteric lore and symbology based on the number 33.”

Yet another belief based on nothing?

That’s up to you, Biglino seems to say, while brushing the dust from all those big books.

In any case, he adds, it doesn’t much matter how old Yehoshua ben Youssef was when he was dragged to Calvary and crucified along with “two other outlaws.”

Not “another two”: two other.

In Greek, “kakourgoi”: anti-Roman resisters.

And this is perhaps the parting gift of this final reconnaissance flight on our magic carpet: the possible unveiling of an entirely different story.

As for the dates, if anyone is interested in further demolishing the Christological fascination of the number 33, another clue seems to come from the Gospel of John.

“In chapter 8 we read that Jesus is arguing with the Pharisees. At one point, he makes a very fiery statement that they cannot accept. So, they address him, saying, “You’re not yet even 50 years old. How dare you say these things?”

Biglino observes, “Can one say ‘you are not yet even 50’ to someone who was at most 33? It would be more natural to accuse him of not yet having reached 40, not 50. A clear hint that he had to have been over 40 years of age.”

So the man of Golgotha was in his forties.

But again, so what? What difference does it make?

“None whatsoever. His age is certainly not the most interesting aspect of the episode cited by John.”

What is?

“The Pharisees. Or rather, the relationship with these masters. We are often told that these disputes were rather characteristic of Jesus, intent on fighting Pharaism.”

And that’s false?

“Of course. The Pharisee masters were his colleagues. Disputes among the Pharisees were an age-old practice. Reading the Talmud makes this clear. This is how the Pharisees studied, based on the (very useful) method of contradictory arguments, fundamental for penetrating, in-depth study, questioning anything and everything. Exactly the opposite attitude of our religious tradition, which is based on dogmas. Our misunderstanding leads us to see Jesus as being generally confrontational with the Pharisees.”

And wasn't he?

“How could he have been? He was one of them, in theory.”

In theory?

“Of course: if we *pretend* he actually existed.”

Why Would Genesis Be Lying about Methuselah's Age?

Bereshit. In the beginning.

After having read Mauro Biglino, that fascinating opening statement in the Bible takes on another flavor altogether.

In the beginning of what? Is it alluding to the origin of time or rather to the beginning of our little story, which scientists still argue about?

The Big Bang theory is still the one standing center-stage.

Analyses by the Atacama Cosmology Telescope have just confirmed the predictions of the standard cosmological model, as have the most recent European revelations of the ESA's Plank satellite: the universe has existed for some 13.8 billion years.

The study of so-called "cosmic background radiation" – the electromagnetic emission that permeates space – seems to prove this. This is what remains of the first light that appeared after the Big Bang. About 380,000 years later, protons and electrons began to join, forming the first atoms.

The information gathered by the powerful telescope in Chile's Atacama Desert is precious. It can provide us with clues about the birth, the nature and even the "remaining life" of our universe.

"In practice, it is as if we were restoring the 'childhood photos of the universe' to their original condition, eliminating the wear and tear of the time and space that have distorted these images," explains astrophysicist Neelima Sehgal of New York's Stony Brook University.

"Only by looking at the most accurate 'childhood photos' of the universe can we find out precisely how it was born."

Not only how it was born, but even when it was born.

The key to measuring the expansion of the cosmos seems to be the Hubble Constant, which is a value that identifies a precise relationship between the velocity at which galaxies are moving away from each other and the distance between them. By knowing the Hubble Constant, it is believed, it should be possible to establish how long ago the universe began to expand, and form

there we should be able to trace its presumed age.

The result? Almost 14 billion years.

Bereshit, by any chance?

“In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth,” reads the opening of Genesis in the conventional version. Those who translate the expression “Elohim” as “God” and decide to use the verb “create” to render “bara” – which never means “to create from nothing”, but is rather closer in significance to “to separate”, or in any case to operate on something that already exists.

Dictionary in hand, the literal translation done by Biglino greatly downsizes even Genesis.

“The earth was formless and deserted and darkness covered the abyss and the spirit of God hovered over the waters.”

Very suggestive indeed. But what happens if the words are left in their original meaning?

In place of the “spirit”, we have the Ruach: a “wind” which in other biblical passages seems just like the unusual mighty gusts caused by a large aircraft.

Like the one that could have “taken” Enoch, the sixth direct descendant of Adam and Eve and great-grandfather of Noah.

Rather than taken, he was literally “pulled up”.

The same expression, Biglino notes, is also used for the so-called ascension of Jesus Christ, the most famous of all “ascensions”.

The most famous, but certainly not the first.

Zarathustra comes to mind again, transported to heaven seven times in the presence of Ahura Mazda, thanks to the intervention – a physical one according to the Mazdean text – of an exceptional “space taxi driver”, Vohu Manah, the archangel of Good Thought.

What does this mean? That moral virtue (“good thought”) can make the “soul” rise to the heights of heaven?

In reality, the Zoroastrian Avesta speaks of a concrete, physical journey. So Vohu Manah had special powers, like comic book superheroes? Did he possess the prodigious art of teleportation, or did he fly on some kind of Space Shuttle?

One could decide to reduce these stories to ante-litteram science fiction, or

better still – as those who prefer their essentially symbolic value do – to consider them parables, admirable and illuminating stories, but mere literature, though intended to reveal great truths through simple stories directed at infantile humanity.

What if we “pretend” once again, with Biglino, that the intent of these traces (literary, of course) was to preserve the memory of events that really took place?

Ufologists have long been referring to these “assumptions” as “abductions”.

It is implied that they have never ceased and occur regularly even today.

Close encounters, resulting in the temporary “kidnapping” of human beings.

Hypothesis: the ancient texts – from the Avesta to the Bible, along with the Indian Vedas – have been trying to tell us about these adventures since the beginning, once it was possible to put it all in black on white.

Scholars continue to believe that the emergence of the written language dates to 5000 years ago. First was the cuneiform alphabet, the one attributed to the Sumerian civilization in Mesopotamia.

As is well known, Homo sapiens is much older than that. Our ancestors are thought to have come from sub-Saharan Africa. Artefacts have emerged in Kibish, Ethiopia, near the Omo River, dating back almost 200,000 years.

And what about the events of the Gan Eden?

Those are much more recent, says Biglino. “Describing the events of the lineage of Adam and Eve, set in Gan, the ‘walled and guarded garden’ located in the region of Eden, probably between Mesopotamia, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, Genesis speaks only of the ‘manufacturing’ of the Adamites, a ‘race’ of particularly intelligent workers able to understand and perform the necessary instructions and work hard in place of the Elohim, who in that very same Gan experimented with the production of food, both animal and vegetable.”

“Bereshi”, therefore, may simply refer to the beginning of the history of that extraordinary garden.

The Bible writes that Adam, the male, “was placed in Gan Eden,” but it does not specify where he came from.

“The female, Eve, on the other hand, is ‘made’ in the Gan.”

This is where the actual biblical story begins, with the very long lineage of Adam and Eve.

An earthly affair, apparently, but not exclusively terrestrial.

“Perhaps,” says Biglino, “reality goes far beyond the imagination of those who built on top of it, embroidering it with spiritual, allegorical and symbolic meanings.”

For starters, says the scholar, it is useful to focus in on the Adamites as Genesis presents them. This is not just a vertical succession of famous descendants and firstborns, but also and above all the progressive and collateral substance of a real community, one in which great-grandchildren and great-grandparents were contemporaries, since each of them lived for almost a thousand years.

Let’s take Adam, the forefather. He lives up to 930, but he is “barely” 130 when he gives birth to Seth, his third son, the brother of Cain and Abel.

In turn, Seth lives to the age of 912 but is 105 when he becomes Enosh’s father.

In the same way, other firstborns follow the same pattern.

In a direct line: Qenan (910 years), Malaleel (895), Yared (962) and Enoch himself.

Here the linear sequence is interrupted, since Enoch does not die and is simply taken away by the Elohim at the age of 365.

However, Enoch is not without descent. At 187 years old, while he was still on Earth, he had the time to sire the super-long-lived Methuselah, who lived for 969 years.

Methuselah begat Lamech, who died at 777 years of age. And at the considerable age of 182, the “young” Lamech will witness yet another unusual birth, Noah, who in turn will generate Shem, Ham and Japheth.

“According to Genesis, when Lamech was born, old Enoch – his grandfather – was 365 years old. That is when he is taken away by the Elohim”.

Is it possible to believe those verses?

Biglino reaffirms his position on this matter. If we “pretend” that they are telling us the truth, we can focus on a theoretically coherent reality.

What about the incredible ages of all those pre-Flood patriarchs?

“I repeat: if we divide them by ten, as some suggest we should do, then we would have to do the same for the ages of Abraham and Moses and take from

that that the greatest leaders of the biblical story were but children at the time. Abraham would have lived just until 17 years of age, and Moses 12. It doesn't make any sense."

Is it safer to believe that Methuselah really reached 969?

"Yes, if we suppose that those earliest Adamites had genetic material that was very close to that of their initial 'makers'."

Biglino insists on this crucial issue. Let's get rid of the misleading idea of a bunch of lonely old men. There were actually many of them, even though Genesis mentions only the firstborn.

"Rashi himself – recognized as the greatest and most authoritative of all Jewish commentators – recalls that Cain was born with a twin sister, while another two were born along with Abel. So twin births, typical of when the Elohim intervened in human reproduction through what today we would call assisted reproduction."

Twin births, which characterize the biography of many decisive characters in the biblical environment, are a constant.

Including the one still worshipped as a deity today: Jesus Christ.

"One of the apostles is called Thomas, called 'Didymus'. In Greek, 'didymus' means twin. In the Gospels, this is approached in way that could hardly be more explicit."

This, according to Biglino, could also explain the famous "kiss of Judas", given to Christ to distinguish him from his alleged twin Thomas. Did the Roman soldiers really need the traitor to clearly indicate the right man arrest?

Twin births are often an indicator of the unusual origin of newborns. The result of the intervention of the Elohim.

"This happens from the very beginning. As Rashi explains, both Cain and Abel were born twins."

When Cain kills his brother, he is punished. He is expelled from the Gan, and he is frightened. He asks for a distinguishing mark so that he will be recognized and not killed once he is out of the garden.

"Fine, but killed by whom? Weren't Adam and Eve supposed to be our only ancestors, according to tradition?"

Obviously, this is not the case. Cain was afraid of dangerous encounters outside the protected area. In fact, he will leave it only once "the Lord" made a recognizable mark on his forehead.

“There are those who try to deny that the Earth was already inhabited by other people at that time, and therefore formulate various hypotheses. For example, Cain feared being killed in retaliation by his own family.”

But this doesn't hold up, claims Biglino.

“So to protect himself, what does Cain ask for? An identifying mark. As though his own parents wouldn't recognize him?”

Outside the garden, still others say, dangerous animals may have been lurking.

“And do you think the beasts refrained from attacking and devouring him just because of a mark on his forehead?”

Once more, we do well to listen to the Bible rather than to many of the exegetes conditioned by religious thought. Or at least we won't waste time chasing rabbits.

“Isn't it more reasonable to think that Cain was actually afraid of meeting some normal Homo sapiens, who in comparison to them – the highly evolved Adamites – must have seemed like savages, something to stay far away from?”

But the oddities aren't over.

Again in Genesis, in chapter 13, there is a surprising emphasis on the birth of Seth, the third son of Adam and Eve.

“When Adam was 130 years old,” we read, “he fathered a son in his image and likeness.”

Obviously. Children normally resemble their parents.

“But here – and only here – the expression that is used is the same one used for the forefathers, ‘manufactured’ with the Tselem of the Elohim.”

You mean their DNA?

“Yes, and it's odd that Genesis feels the need to use this expression for Seth. Does this mean that he too was ‘produced’ by a particular procedure?”

Biglino draws our attention to the biblical chronology of the Adamites.

“Adam is a contemporary of Seth, Enosh, Qenan, Malaleel, Yared, Methuselah and Noah's father Lamech. He dies shortly before Noah was ‘manufactured’.”

Looked at it this way, the family photo changes significantly.

“I insist: the long years of their lives should not be added together, they need to be considered as overlapping. Think of it this way: all those related individuals related knew each other very well and probably saw each other

constantly, living in the same territory.”

Did they all live for nearly a thousand years?

It’s absolutely possible if we consider that they were all descended directly from the Elohim, who could live up to 20 or 30 thousand years.

Some of the patriarchs reproduced normally, others perhaps did not.

Adam is “placed” in the garden, Eve is cloned, and perhaps even the birth of Seth is the result of this sort of intervention.

And what about the famous Yahweh in all of this?

Completely absent.

He only appears at the time of Seth’s offspring, but not before.

“A son was also born to Seth, whom he named Enosh,” we read in Genesis 4:26. “This is when the name of Yahweh begins to be mentioned.”

So when it was just Adam and Eve, Yahweh is not mentioned at all.

His name does not even appear at the birth of Cain and Abel. And not even later, when Seth comes to light.

Biglino draws a precise conclusion from this. “In the first phase, evidently, there was still no need for the intervention of the warrior Elohim. Let us not forget that the Bible presents Yahweh as ‘Ish Milchamah’, literally “Man of War”.

What can we make of this?

“In the beginning, the Elohim probably worked in the Gan Eden, experimentally producing their own food, taking particular interest in this new ethnic group they had ‘made’ to work for them.”

“It’s a fact,” Biglino points out. “According to Genesis, for the first 235 years, Yahweh was neither named nor invoked. Evidently, he didn’t take part in the operations conducted in the Gan.”

Perhaps not even a super-telescope like the one in Atacama would be enough to glimpse any connection between the biblical Yahweh and the entirely theological idea of the monotheistic, omnipotent and eternal God.

Genesis itself specifies that his name began to circulate only after the birth of Enosh, son of Seth. Then came Qenan and Malaleel, Yared and the mysterious Enoch, and later still Methuselah, Lamech and Noah, with the “Great Reset” of the flood.

And Yahweh?

To really see him at work, Biglino stresses, we have to wait a very long

time.

“Yahweh finally seems to be operational at the time of Abraham. That’s when we find him involved in the wars between the Elohim in the Middle East.”

As for the people of Israel, adds the scholar, Yahweh becomes formally and concretely engaged with them only at the moment of the exodus.

“It happens when he decides to take that people for himself, lead them out of Egypt and use them to conquer a territory to reign over, one where he will be served by these people.”

A controversial debut apparently.

From the Bible we learn, in fact, that the “Man of War” always had to introduce himself, declaring each time that he was the Elohim of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

“He had to repeat that it was still him, as if he felt the need to confirm his identity, evidently not entirely accepted by his people at the beginning.”

“Who are you?”

Moses himself asks him.

“This question seems absolutely unthinkable if Moses had intended to address it to the one transcendent God.”

Moses, Biglino recalls, actually needed to know which Elohim he was dealing with.

“But Yahweh prefers to tell him, “You will remember me by this name.”

YHWH.

The famous Tetragrammaton, with no vowels.

“We do not know in what language that name was pronounced, so we cannot even be sure of giving that name a proper meaning.”

“Evidently,” Biglino surmises, “Yahweh didn’t really want to reveal himself, even though he continually felt the need to reiterate that he was the same figure who had presented himself to their fathers.”

He insists on this in several passages. He says that he is the same El as the El of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.

Wasn’t that the truth?

“In the Bible, it is Moses himself who reminds his followers that Yahweh had not made that covenant with their fathers. He was doing it exclusively with them at the time of the exodus.”

Who was right, Yahweh or Moses?

“In fact,” concludes Biglino, “the Bible itself tells us that when they were in Mesopotamia, the first members of Abraham’s family dealt with other Elohim.”

The Old Testament later adds that during the exodus, Yahweh did everything by himself. It is written that “there was no foreign Elohim” with him.

Does the Bible sound strange when re-read this way?

It shouldn’t, says Mauro Biglino, since this is exactly what it says, right from the very first verses.

Bereshit.

The Gan Eden, the twins, the “making of mankind”. The patriarchs whose lives span almost a thousand years and who probably all lived together like a sort of community.

And it’s a place that is anything but boring, with people constantly coming and going.

Like Enoch, for example, the father of Methuselah and great-grandfather of Noah.

A fascinating character, this sixth direct descendant of Adam and Eve.

The Letter of Jude, in the New Testament, also mentions him as the seventh patriarch.

“Enoch lived 365 years in all and walked with God, then he has never seen again because God took him,” and the very same thing will later happen to the prophet Elijah.

“Enoch pleased the Lord and was taken as an instructive example for all generations,” writes the Book of Sirach.

“Because of his faith, Enoch was taken away so as not to experience death; and he was never found because God had taken him,” we read in the Letter to the Hebrews.

Exactly like Elijah. But how was he “taken away”?

“As they were walking and talking together, suddenly a chariot of fire and horses of fire appeared and separated the two of them, and Elijah went up to heaven in a whirlwind,” writes the Book of Kings (2:11).

So the “usual” celestial chariot. This can be appreciated even better once the theological translation (“God”) is replaced by the original word, Elohim.

The Patriarch Enoch, many scholars point out, had all the requisites to

become an important figure in the apocryphal literature that flourished in the last centuries before Christ and in the first century of the Christian era.

And what is it that makes him so special?

Not only does he not die, but he finds himself in the presence of none other than God himself, Just as Zarathustra had the honor of ending up before Ahura Mazda, face to face.

The script is almost identical here. The divinity briefs the chosen one on the secrets of life.

A long tradition, so to speak.

In Mesopotamia, it is a Babylonian patriarch (the seventh, just like Enoch) who receives the revelation of the “divine secrets”. His name is Emmeduranki.

It’s as though we were faced with a repeating pattern. The chosen one becomes a recipient of divine knowledge, initiated into the “celestial mysteries”.

As a prototype, Enoch gave life to a vast corpus of apocryphal figures of great wisdom. The Book of Enoch has come down to us in various versions. The Ethiopian version, the most famous of all, is preserved by the Coptic Christians. Other versions, adopted by the Slavic world, are preserved in Orthodox monasteries in Serbia and Russia.

Like an ambassador suspended between heaven and earth, Enoch became an object of great interest during the Renaissance as well. In his *Orlando Furioso*, Ariosto places him in Eden along with Elijah.

Enoch is also found in contemporary literature. He appears in the last dialogue between Marco Polo and Kublai Khan in the book *The Invisible Cities* by Italo Calvino, but he is also present in Bram Stoker’s *Dracula* and even in the best seller *The Name of the Rose* by Umberto Eco.

“God will send his servants Elijah and Enoch, whom he has kept alive in Eden so that one day they will confound the Antichrist.”

Speaking here are two friars, Ubertino and Guglielmo. And it is only to be expected that they speak of Enoch in religious terms.

Naturally, in the medieval setting of *The Name of the Rose*, there is no room for paleo-astronautics. Not even when set in the Gan Eden.

Enoch and the Others, Strolling Around in Space

People coming, people going.

While Enoch says farewell to earthlings and leaves with the Elohim at the age of 365, a number that coincides with the number of days in a year, there is someone else who seems to allude to equally unusual arrivals.

Still in the context of the antediluvian patriarchs, Mauro Biglino mentions Enoch's father Yared.

“Yared's verbal root means ‘to descend’,” the scholar explains.

What might this mean?

A simple descendance or an actual descent?

Biglino favors the second hypothesis. “I believe that this name bears the memory of a great descent, an important descent.”

Moreover, if Yared indicated a landing, his son Enoch (the man of the take-off) would be his mirror image.”

“The Bible does not give us a direct account of that descent,” says Biglino. “But it does tell us that, at a certain point, the sons of the Elohim saw that the daughters of the Adam were ‘tovot’ (beautiful, attractive, suitable) and took as many of them as they wanted as companions and wives.”

And to be clear, this was before Noah, before the flood and the rescue of a single family.

According to Biglino, the Great Flood was an “operation” by which the Elohim attempted to restore order to situation that had become unacceptably confusing as a result of those improper unions between human females and the male children of the Elohim.

And what about this descent, which would be evoked through Yared's name?

“We find it in the Apocrypha of the Old Testament – in the Book of the Watchers, to be specific – where it speaks of the 200 rebel angels who descended to Earth and took Adamite women as companions.”

And that's not all. “They teach them a series of things that they should not have known because that sort of knowledge was supposed to have remained

the exclusive prerogative of the Elohim.”

These concepts are vital, strategic. The “fallen angels” teach women science and technology, metallurgy, medicine, astronomy. They instruct them on how to build weapons, and even (genetics, once again) on how to breed animals of different species, resulting in hybrids like the mule.

How could this contact between celestial beings and terrestrial women have happened?

The Book of the Watchers describes it explicitly. “When the sons of men had multiplied, in those days, beautiful and comely daughters were born to them. And the Watchers, the sons of heaven, saw them and desired them. And they said to one another, ‘Come, let us choose for ourselves wives from the daughters of men, and let us beget children for ourselves.’”

Their leader Semeyaza is aware that he is committing a crime. “I fear that you will not want to do this deed, and I alone shall be guilty of a great sin.”

His “colleagues” encourage him: let’s do this together, they tell him. Let’s go down to Earth and take those women. “And they descended to Ardis, onto the peak of Mount Hermon. And they called it Mount Hermon because there they had taken an oath,” the story continues. They had sworn not to betray the leader Semeyaza.

Is this an adventure “film”?

Yes, but with serious inaccuracies. The first to correct them, Biglino explains, was Byzantine scholar Giorgio Sincello, who lived at the end of the first millennium.

The reading “they came down to Ardis” is wrong, Sincello reveals, because – as can be seen from the Aramaic or the Greek version – instead of reading “and they descended to Ardis,” it should read “and they descended at the time of Yared.”

Bingo. “This was the descent,” concludes Biglino.

And was this “landing” on our planet really so important?

It certainly seems so, according to Rashi’s commentary on Genesis.

“When the daughters of the Adamites made a woman beautiful in preparation for the wedding canopy,” Rashi writes, “one of the powerful entered and possessed her first.”

“Ugly news, when we recall that the ‘powerful’ one in charge must have been one of the Elohim, one of the ‘Sons of God’, or perhaps one of the Malachim, the ‘angels’.”

It is St. Paul himself, moreover, who warns girls about “angel sex”. Their brutal impetuosity is also fully confirmed by this distinguished Hebrew commentator of the Bible.

But that is not all.

According to Rashi, the sons of the Elohim even took “married women, men and animals.”

This is the text.

Married women, men and animals?

“This is all actually even more unacceptable. In practice,” Biglino summarizes, “what Rashi tells us is that the children of the Elohim came down and did whatever they wanted because they were so powerful. And they could couple with brides-to-be, newlyweds, with young males, and – even if it is hard to accept – with animals”.

Abominable practices, we would say today, though not so infrequent, if it is true that the supreme legislator of the Exodus felt the need to mention and sanction them among the 613 Commandments.

What can we say? It’s written in the Bible.

In Genesis, again, after the list of firstborn of the pre-Flood patriarchs, we read a disconcerting verse, a kind of distancing between the “builders” and their “creatures”.

“Then,” we read, “the Lord said, ‘My Spirit shall not abide in man forever, for he is flesh: his days shall be 120 years.’”

This is very interesting, notes Biglino, especially if we “pretend” that what is written actually happened.

“I realize that this is a difficult passage to accept for the majority of scholars.”

As always, the translator tries to immerse himself in the psychology of the biblical authors and decipher their intentions.

The result?

“Actually, the writers of Genesis did not question these problems, because they didn’t need to transmit the religious message that would be constructed afterwards.”

In other words, they wanted to remind us – this is the hypothesis – that those old men really did live for hundreds of years.

“They wrote about the lives of those Adamite patriarchs because they were

descendants of the lineage of Adam. They possessed a high percentage of the Elohim's genetic makeup, so they lived very long lives, and this was perfectly normal. Then, at a certain point, the Elohim intervened and decided not to share their genetic material anymore. In fact, we can observe how the length of their lives gradually diminishes. It goes from 600 years to 500, then 400, all the way down to the lives of Abraham and Moses, similar to ours."

Biglino pauses once again on the scenario presented: this was no succession of solitary existences, far from it.

"We really have to overlap the lives of the patriarchs. Adam has Seth when he is 130 years old, so when Adam turns 900, Seth turns 770."

The perspective changes dramatically.

"Let's think about this. When Noah was born, Adam had just recently passed away."

In other words, these patriarchs shared centuries together.

"This is amazing, and it is readily explainable. They were part of a very specific clan, a very special one, and genetically very close to the 'makers' of Adam and Eve."

Then, at some point, the Elohim decided to intervene in the clan again with another "product", Noah.

The reason?

"They needed to restore genetic purity."

This all suggests some strange "animal husbandry" practices, with regular and sharply focused interventions: the earliest example of stockbreeding, and applied to our species?

Everything happens in a highly-controlled context, where no one is unaware of the destiny of the others, if it is true that Adam was still alive at the time of the birth of Seth and later Enoch, who would travel back and forth with the Elohim.

Then why invent necessarily artificial content?

"There are a whole series of things that are fantastic, exciting. And they are much more so when we 'pretend' that the Bible is true, than when they try to transform these stories into myths and allegories, with everyone reading into them whatever they want."

But are there myths in the Bible or not?

It's a question of terminology, Biglino maintains.

“The texts of the Old Testament (I am thinking above all of Genesis) present stories that have their roots in ancient Mesopotamian lore, so in the Sumerian-Akkadian stories.”

Scholars, in fact, classify these as mythological tales.

To name a few, the Atra-Hasis speaks of the “construction” of humans, Gilgamesh tells of the Flood, the Epic of Erra tells the story of the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah.

Does all this sound familiar?

“Of course. It all has a lot to do with the Bible because it is in those stories that the Bible has its roots. This is confirmed by rabbinic studies published in the United States, studies I have often cited. They clearly say that the “origin stories” especially, like Genesis, did not originate in Palestine, but in Mesopotamia. And in fact, the Mesopotamian Sumer-Akkadian texts (belonging first to Sumerian culture and then to Akkadian, which was the first Semitic culture in the area) represent the real source from which the Bible derives.”

By deduction, the biblical Elohim are the counterparts of the Anunna or Anunnaki in Sumer-Akkadian culture.

“The Anunnaki are a vast and diverse community of individuals, not just one. This, too, is (non-grammatical) proof of their plurality.”

This is the point. “This plurality is not doubted by scholars. It’s just classified as mythology.”

For Biglino, this is an unviable conclusion. The presence of other similar entities, the Ilanu, demonstrates this.

“The Anunna, I repeat, are called by this name in Sumerian and in Eastern Semitic (Akkadian). In Western Semitic, they become El, Elohim, Eloah, an expression that immediately recalls the Arab term Allah.”

The moral?

“If we are talking about Semitic languages, the root is always the same. The term Anunna, on the other hand, is from Sumerian, a non-Semitic language.”

But this doesn’t change much.

“El, Elohim, Ilu or Ilanu, Anunna or Anunnaki. We’re always talking about the same figures.”

The difference?

“The Elohim are made to become ‘God’, while the others remain

mythological characters. But this discrimination is absolutely unjustified.”

The Bible, Biglino points out, is actually quite clear.

“When Genesis, in chapter 6, speaks of the sons of the Elohim who couple with the daughters of men, it is certainly not expressed in spiritual terms: seducing girls is not exactly a theological attribute.”

Genesis also says that there were giants in those times, “when the sons of God still coupled with the daughters of men, and these women bore their children. These, we read, are the heroes of old, men of renown.”

But traditional exegesis warns us: those, they say, were not the “children of God”, they were “angels”.

“I take note of this. But it occurs to me to say that if I were to behave like this with my own translations, they would accuse me of changing the meaning according to what best suits my arguments. But this, in fact, is precisely what they do. The children of God are demoted to the rank of ‘angels’ if they start seducing women.”

Angels, rulers, angelic powers. Or perhaps judges.

“In Psalm 82, the Elohim gather in assembly. The one presiding over the assembly reprimands them severely for their wickedness and reminds them that one day they will die, ‘just like the Adam.’ And what do we find written in the footnotes? That those reproached were not Elohim, but mere judges.”

What does the text say?

“That they were Elohim.”

And so?

“What do you think? As soon as the Elohim become embarrassing, they are no longer ‘God’ but become normal, human, judges.”

What a shame that the Hebrew term is always the same: Elohim.

“Exactly. If this is the way we want to approach it, ladies and gentlemen, then we can really do whatever we want with this text.”

The result is obvious. Translated like this, the appearance of the Bible changes.

It is no longer the Bible. It no longer tells the story it set out to tell.

Mauro Biglino spoke about some of these issues once again at the end of 2020, with Davide Bolognesi, PhD of Columbia University. The video ended up on the prestigious New York university platform.

The central topic of the discussion, once again, was Genesis.

Bereshit, in fact.

In the Garden of Eden there are two trees: the Tree of Life and the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil.

According to tradition, “God” says to the founders of the Adamites, “You cannot touch the Tree of Knowledge, or you will die.”

Adam and Eve couldn’t care less about the warning, and they eat the fruit. But then they don’t die at all.

Incidentally, in biblical Hebrew “eating the fruit” means just one thing: copulating.

So they are not killed, but they are kicked out.

“That was not a punishment, it was prevention. Since they have already taken from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, ‘God’ feared that they might do the same with the Tree of Life a well.”

Odd. How could God possibly be afraid of man?

The answer is obvious: that was not God. In his place, the plural noun Elohim appears.

If anything, they are the ones who fear that their “herd” will get out of control.

It is no surprise that in this case as well, the Bible is consistent. It is not God who fears men, it is the Elohim who are concerned about the unexpected initiative of the Adamites.

Who, in turn, do not fear death threats.

Isn’t that strange?

“If I really think about, I wouldn’t say so. If Adam and Eve were not ‘made’ like ordinary mortals, because they were ‘constructed’ through genetic engineering, it is absolutely conceivable that they did not even know what death was. They are the first. They have never seen anyone around them die. They have no concept of death.”

What’s more, they are not executed at all.

“‘God’ limits himself to sending them away, and they’ll live for centuries.”

Jewish exegetes do not believe the story of divine retribution (the source, for Christians, of the enormous weight of original sin).

The departure from the Gan Eden? A preventive measure.

“In one of the Bibles published by the Jewish publishing house Mamash, there is a note stating that the death of Adam and Eve is not a punishment,” Biglino emphasizes.

“It says that this was the normal condition of man. Having been born from the earth, from matter, through ageing and deterioration, he could only go back to where he came from. They say this in absolute tranquility. It was subsequent elaboration that instilled in us the fear of sin and the consequences of sin, the sense of guilt.”

We have to die because we are the children of a couple who disobeyed.

“For starters, it is not true that we are the children of those two, as Adam and Eve are not the forefathers of humanity. They are the founders of one very particular line. Israeli Jews (and rightly so, I’d say) see themselves as the direct descendants of that particular lineage.”

If there were such thing as original sin, it would – at most – concern only them, and not the rest of humanity.

It was the Adamites, not ordinary sapiens, who frightened the Elohim.

“Exactly. Their removal is evidence of the fear held by the Elohim, who said, ‘Now that they have achieved certain abilities, they might become unmanageable and therefore dangerous.’ So they kicked them out. If by chance they had learned how to extend life as well, that would have been an unresolvable problem for the Elohim.”

There was only one solution: remove them from the Gan Eden. Besides, according to the Bible, the “enclosed and protected garden” had only one entrance. If it were guarded, no one would be able to enter it.

“But can you imagine an omnipotent and omniscient God who needs to put set a guard at the entrance, so that mere men (who were little more than little beasts) could not enter it and have access to the procedures that provided such longevity?”

Gilgamesh himself, Biglino adds, went in search of “long life”, just like the so-called deities.

“And the Mesopotamian hero knew very well that ‘long life’ (and not ‘eternal life’, a concept which does not even exist in the Bible) did not require kneeling or being a good person. No, you had to go to a specific place. If you didn’t go there, you wouldn’t obtain ‘long life’. Put together, all of this gives us an idea of what sort of place this might be, where certain techniques were known and practiced, techniques we humans now beginning to learn.”

The first step was the cloning of the sheep Dolly.

Greenlight from rabbis like Egael Safran, university professor of medical

ethics in Jerusalem. There's no problem, since the Bible has known about cloning for 4000 years.

If we pull the blindfold from our eyes, we can see very well that Genesis clearly describes a genetic intervention of this kind.

Adam falls into a deep sleep, something we now call anesthesia, then the Elohim proceed with the operation.

"They take something from the sleeping body of Adam. The term is translated as 'rib' but it actually means 'side part'."

Then they close up the flesh where they had taken the sample.

"Can you picture a spiritual God, omniscient and omnipotent, who starts performing these operations?"

The traditional answer is ready to hand: "Come now, it's just an allegorical representation."

"Let's be serious here. Who could possibly have come up with an allegorical representation like that, thousands of years ago? No one. Only someone who knew about these things because they'd done them, then thought it important to write about them so that they would be remembered."

Verse after verse, the thesis of the omniscient biblical God really seems to collapse.

"Eva is only 'made' after a long time, since it took 'God' quite a while to figure out that, for Adam, the company of animals alone was not enough to meet certain needs."

The rabbis and leading Jewish commentators confirm this. "They say that Adam, before having Eve, had sexual relations with all the animals that were present in the Gan Eden."

The prohibition of having sex with animals, in fact, started only after the appearance of Eve, adds Biglino.

When he sees her, Adam rejoices.

"This time," he says, "she is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."

Jewish translators who produce English-language editions for English-speaking countries, even write "finally".

"As if to say, 'The others you gave me before weren't good enough. This one, though, finally, is the right one, done correctly, through cloning'."

This scene might seem comical, but Biglino is quite serious.

"If we could forget for a moment that that sentence is written in the Bible and put it in a scientific journal, the whole world would say that what is

described here is the collection of stem cells from the lateral part of a human body.”

Now we know that stem cells are taken principally from the iliac crest (a curved lateral part) in a minor surgery with a small suture.

“And the stem cells are totipotent, ones we can then work with.”

Voilà.

“If it were written in a scientific journal, no one would have any doubts. But all this is in the Bible, so it is not true?”

What a question.

“You know that I just ‘pretend’ that it’s true.”

All Those Undead, Whisked Away by the Elohim

Long life. It sounds like a mirage, a fairy tale. Almost like a legend, or better, a mythological suggestion. This is generally how the incredible longevity, so exorbitant for us, of the antediluvian patriarchs is described.

Is it really impossible to live so long?

Not necessarily.

A scientific study from 2015 suggests the possibility. Strangely enough (but perhaps not by chance), the study was conducted in the field of space travel.

The subject of this experiment was American astronaut Scott Kelly. NASA sent him to the ISS orbital station, where he stayed for 340 days.

Here is the interesting detail: his brother, Mark, also an astronaut, stayed on Earth. So where is the big news? Scott and Mark are twins, so they share the same genome. Once again, it would seem, it is precisely twin births that bring the most sensational surprises, from the time of the biblical Elohim right to the present day.

A quick look at the objective of the Kelly brothers' mission is enough to understand. The purpose was to measure the effects of a prolonged presence in space on human beings, with a twin on Earth as a point of comparison.

The "One-Year Mission" – an explicit name.

The result of this experiment?

Mission accomplished, after three years of study. Ten different research teams worked on different physiological aspects of the Kelly twins, both during the mission period and in the first six months following Scott's return.

They discovered that the man who had been aboard the ISS for nearly a year was rejuvenated in appearance compared to his twin. His telomeres seemed not to have shortened.

Telomeres?

These are genetic elements in the shape of a hood, scientists explain. They are crucial "accessories" that protect the ends of the DNA string from degradation and incomplete replication.

With time, through continuous cell replication, telomeres shorten. To be clear, they shorten on Earth, not in space. Scott Kelly's had, in fact, lengthened while in orbit.

Browsing through Mauro Biglino's books, the so-called undead suddenly come to mind: Elijah, Enoch, Moses. Not dead at least in the biblical narrative, after being "taken away by the Elohim."

Biglino is still concentrating on the great "air traffic" that seems to emerge from the Old Testament.

Arrivals and departures, movements so bizarre and remarkable that they were certainly remembered.

"Think of Yared, the fifth direct descendant of Adam and Eve."

Yared, son of Mahalaleel and father, so to speak, of the "proto-astronaut" Enoch.

We remember him well. "For the Apocrypha, the very name of Yared holds the memory of the great descent of the 200 so-called angels, or children of the Elohim, who took the Adamite females – "as many as they wanted" – to join with them."

It was supposedly this hybridization that contributed to permanently lengthening the lives of many of the Adamites, and not just the firstborn of the founders but the other relatives as well. Dozens, hundreds, maybe thousands. A crowded community of people destined never to grow old?

It seems that way, at least reading Hebrew exegesis. In one passage, in fact, we read that at a certain point it was Abraham himself who asked the Elohim if signs of age might finally be permitted to appear on the bodies of the earthlings.

In the rabbinic text, Biglino specifies, the request is addressed to "Hashem", which means "the Name", a formula used by religious Jews to avoid naming the divinity they identify in the Bible, even when the Old Testament proposes the usual plural term, Elohim.

"Before Avraham, they all remained young in appearance until death," write the Jewish exegetes. Then, "Avraham asked Hashem to receive the physical signs of old age, arguing, 'If a father and son are alike in appearance, how will one know which of the two to honor when they enter the same place together?'"

The "problem" must have been quite evident since the time of Adam and Eve, when the Adamites lived face-to-face with the Elohim and died only

after 8 or 9 centuries.

The exception to this?

Enoch, the son of Yared. He went away “prematurely” at the age of 365.

Passed away, but not dead.

“He did not die of old age in his bed,” Hebrew exegesis writes. “He simply disappeared prematurely, compared to the average life span of the time.”

Disappeared how?

We know that: he left with the Elohim. Exactly like Elijah, who climbed on a Ruach of the Elohim, and just like Moses, who according to Josephus “disappeared in a cloud” in the land of Moab.

Mauro Biglino insists on Enoch. Does his fantastic story have something really decisive to suggest to us?

“In Genesis 5:22, we are told that Enoch ‘walked with God.’”

Literally.

“Enoch, after having generated Methuselah, lived for another 300 years and fathered sons and daughters.”

On Earth, “Enoch’s entire life lasted 365 years.”

Then the unexpected event happened.

“Enoch walked with God,” Genesis repeats, “and he was no more because God had taken him.”

For further details, Biglino continues, we need to open the Book of Secrets in Enoch, which the publisher Utet has included in the splendid edition of the Apocrypha of the Old Testament.

In the book, the very words of the “space-patriarch” are quoted.

“At that time,” says Enoch, “when I was 365 years old, in the first month, on the solemn day of the first month, I was alone in my house, crying and grieving with my eyes. While I was resting in my bed, sleeping, two very tall men appeared in front of me, men of such height as I had never seen on Earth.”

Careful here, Biglino warns us. This seems to be a vision in a dream-like state. Enoch is, in fact, still sleeping.

Then follows an accurate description of the two “very tall men” who appeared at the foot of his bed.

“Their face was bright as the shining sun, their eyes like burning lamps, from their mouths came a fire, their clothes a diffusion of feathers and their

arms were like golden wings at my bedside.”

Eyes as bright as the sun, mouths of fire, dressed in feathers and arms like wings of gold.

“They called me by my name, I woke up from my sleep.”

The scene changes now. Enoch is no longer sleeping, and he discovers that the two visitors are real. They are right in front of him, in flesh and blood.

“These men were real and close to me,” he specifies.

Really?

This word, Biglino emphasizes, is so important that the Apocrypha volume’s editor dwells on it in a note. The expression “real”, only appears to be redundant, superfluous, is actually “just trying to underline the fact that what happens to Enoch on this occasion is not a vision, that it is about events that really occurred.”

At least according to the Book of Secrets in Enoch.

Mere tales?

You’ll have to decide for yourself, says Biglino. You choose.

“If we ‘pretend’ that this story is authentic, we are faced with the possibility of coming to understand many things that, one pieced together, form a coherent picture. To be clear, we have no proof. Consistency is not in itself synonymous with authenticity. But in the meantime, it is a fact, suggesting the seriousness of a hypothesis, one that is theoretically illuminating.”

The alternative?

Darkness, says the scholar. The alternatives we have are false leads and mystery. And this doesn’t apply to Enoch alone; it applies to everything.

“If we say that these stories are mere inventions, then we can take all these books and throw them away, because they are useless. But if we throw these away, we throw away the Bible, too. And if we throw away the Bible, you must know that we throw away everything that has been built on the Bible.”

If we remove the first brick, the whole building collapses.

This is the compass that has guided Mauro Biglino’s decades of research. Taking those stories seriously, he reiterates, is a simply the intelligent thing to do. This is also because no one holds the evidence to support their veracity or prove their unreliability.

In any case, how can we talk about proof? We are always referring to books without sources. In other words, take it or leave it.

So why should we throw away certain pages just because they are not suitable for constructing the theology of the one biblical God?

The details of certain descriptions often fascinate Mauro Biglino. They seem far too accurate to be pure fantasy.

Analogies: the two “very tall men” who present themselves to Enoch fit the description of the newborn Noah, in whom his own father, Lamech, recognizes traits that bear no family resemblance.

“Noah also appears with large, shining eyes and a white, luminous face, exactly like the two figures described by Enoch.”

The narrative features of these pages, Biglino points out, remain extremely realistic.

“When he says that he finds himself in front of the ‘great leader’, of the Lord of the Empire, Enoch says that his face becomes hot, to the point of burning.”

The intervention of a Malach is even required to cool down the man “taken away by the Elohim.”

“Standing before the face of the king of kings, who can bear the infinite fear or the great burning?” we read. “The Lord called a terrifying angel from among the others and placed him beside me, and this angel cooled my face.”

These are not spiritual annotations, they are thermal ones.

“Do you know what this reminds me of? The story of Moses who, after having asked Yahweh to show him his Kavod, is told by him that he will do so, but only with certain conditions.”

This is a very famous passage from the Exodus.

“Yahweh says to Moses, ‘You cannot look at it from the front, but only from behind. If you watch it as it comes towards you, the Kavod will kill you. If you don’t want to die, hide behind the rocks and be content to observe it from the back after it has passed.’” Instructions that Moses meticulously follows.

Fundamental precautions, even if still not entirely sufficient.

“We know from the Book of Exodus that, after that event, when Moses comes down the mountain to return to the camp, he is not in perfect physical condition. His face is burned. That means that the mere proximity to the Kavod, although protected by the shelter offered by hiding behind the rocks, has caused him burns.”

Moses just like Enoch: could approaching the Elohim burn one's skin?

The analogies, of course, are not limited to sensory descriptions.

Just like Moses and Noah, Enoch is a chosen one. He is taken up and welcomed into the heights of heaven. Admitted "before God," as was Zarathustra. Face to face with Ahura Mazda.

God, or, to quote Enoch, the King of Kings. Or the Lord of the Empire, adopting Biglino's lexicon.

The function of these "ascensions" is always the same. The chosen one receives strategic instructions for the destiny of humanity.

The case of Noah, however, is famously a very special one. According to the Bible, he too "walked with God," just like Enoch.

Noah receives a warning from the "divinity": the Earth will be devastated by a flood. Nobody believes him, not even when they see him building that gigantic boat.

Then the Great Flood really happens and Noah's family will be the only one to be saved from the catastrophe.

A sort of planned re-establishment, a Great Reset.

For Jewish exegesis, the covenant that God makes with Noah is true for him and for his descendants, so for all humanity. The covenant even extends to all living creatures, the "birds, beasts, and wild animals" that had been brought to safety in the ark.

"I establish my covenant with you. Never again will all life be cut off by the waters of a flood; never again will there be a flood to destroy the earth."

A solemn seal, on the part the "divinity".

"This," according to Genesis chapter 9, "is the sign of the covenant I am making between me and you and every living creature with you, a covenant for all generations to come."

A pact destined to last for generations.

"Olam": an indefinite time.

For his part, Noah swears to respect the seven commandments, the Noachide precepts.

The Babylonian Talmud summarizes: there are six prohibitions and only one positive recommendation, the exhortation to exercise justice by establishing courts. The others are proscriptions, prohibiting idolatry and blasphemy, illicit sexual relations, murder, theft, the consumption of the meat of a living animal.

Once again, according to Jewish commentators, the Seven Commandments of Noah are addressed to the whole of humanity.

“The subsequent ones, dictated by Yahweh,” Biglino stresses, “are famously reserved for the people of Israel alone.”

Just read Deuteronomy, for example. In chapter 5, Moses is speaking to his follower. He remembers that Yahweh, whom he calls “our Elohim”, made a covenant with them on Horeb, Mount Sinai.

“Not with our fathers did Yahweh make this covenant,” Moses reiterates, “but with us who are all alive here today.”

So, Biglino observes, we have a clear distinction between the two covenants. “Unlike the second one, between Yahweh and the Israelites, the first covenant with Noah (made by an El, or by a group of Elohim), actually concerned all of humanity.”

Maimonides, the famous Jewish scholar who lived in Spain in the 11th century, writes, “Anyone who accepts the seven commandments and observes them with care is considered a gentile devotee.”

A “gentile” devotee. Translated: the observance of Noah’s laws equates non-Jews with the “chosen people”, thus establishing a universal inspiration, not one conditioned by ethnic or religious affiliation.

This is perhaps logical. The Talmud itself, Biglino points out, explicitly states how Noah wasn’t Jewish either.

According to the Torinese scholar, the Elohim’s decision – save Noah to re-establish the terrestrial “colony” on new foundations – has a very solid meaning, linked to the origins of the famous biblical navigator. “It regards his very peculiar birth, owed to artificial insemination.”

The bright eyes, the reddish-blond hair.

“Wasn’t Noah just a righteous man among his contemporaries,” as Genesis 6:9 says?

A righteous man, yes – but in what sense?

“Not in a moral sense,” argues Biglino. “The concreteness of the Hebrew language suggests that the expression ‘righteous’ is used here to define a physical quality, I would say even physio-anatomical. And a genetic one as well, in this case, given that Noah was ‘made’, alarming his own father, Lamech.”

The man of the Ark was a great chosen one.

The Bible reveals another fundamental detail about him, connecting him to

Enoch. He walked with God.

With God?

“Not if we translate the text verbatim. Enoch and Noah walked with the Elohim.”

In both cases, the translator points out, the expression used is the same.

“Itchallech et ha Elohim.”

The first is a verb, while “et” means “with”.

The third expression we encounter, “ha”, is an article.

“Odd, isn’t it? The actual translation should be: “He walked with the God”.

Careful here, Biglino warns us: the article is present, in Hebrew, in the Masoretic Bible itself. It is the translation into contemporary language that “forgets” it.

The God? Which one?

“If it’s God, it’s God. So why then write ‘the God’? What does it mean? His God? The God of others, the God of the so-called pagans? The God who had presented himself to him?”

The usual issue, apparently.

“We seem to be returning to the time when the Elohim presented themselves to Jacob, saying, ‘You must build an altar to that Elohim who has shown himself to you.’”

Another warning here: “In Hebrew, articles do not distinguish between singular and plural. And since in those ‘walks’ of Noah and Enoch, the expression that is used is precisely ‘Elohim’, which is plural, then the article must also be declined in the plural form”.

Not “the God”, or the El, but “the Elohim”. Plural.

And how did they walk? In what way did first Enoch and then Noah walk with the Elohim?

“The verb ‘halach’, used in the cases of both Enoch and Noah, is used in the so-called ‘hitpael’ form, which is the intensive reflexive form, meaning that it stands for something like ‘going back and forth continuously together.’”

Mauro Biglino pulls out a particular grammar book, written by Menachem Artom for Italian Jews who want to learn their ancient language.

Printed in Kiriath Arba, Israel, this grammar book was published by the Union of Italian Israeli Communities.

“I am very fond of this book. My Hebrew teacher gave it to me personally, considering me a particularly diligent student.”

Good. And what does Menachem Artom say?

“It confirms that in ‘hitpael’ form (or conjugation), the verb indicates taking an action in an intensive, pondering and reciprocal way.”

Enoch, Noah and the Elohim. All of them share that verb, “halach” in the “hitpael” form.

“So their meetings were a sort of ‘going back and forth together’. There really is no expression that can properly render this physical and continuous connection.”

The translator’s verdict in this case is unequivocal.

“The matter is clear. Both Enoch and Noah traveled back and forth with the Elohim.”

This is amazing, and possibly exciting.

“Do you realize what this means? An incredible situation is coming to light. It’s extremely fascinating precisely because it is so concrete. Truly beautiful things were happening at that time. The relationship with the Elohim was continuous, constant and physical. Some traveled with the ‘Gods’, walked with them, and there were the children of the Elohim who came down to Earth ...”

Biglino sighs.

“I admit it: I would pay to be able to live in those centuries.”

Res Inexplicatae Volantes

“Anything is possible, as long as you keep an open mind.”

This is a principle that Mauro Biglino has scrupulously followed for many years, rummaging through Hebrew verses and dictionaries, grammar texts, canonical and apocryphal sacred books that have sometimes been underestimated simply because the religious authorities have deemed them unworthy of receiving the chrism of “sacred” officialdom. More often than not, this is precisely because of their excessively explicit content.

Potentially embarrassing truths?

Yes, but not always. And not for everyone.

“There are men of faith who have a much more open mind than many atheists,” Biglino assures us. “For a man of faith, the Elohim might simply be an intermediate passage between us and God. I have nothing to say about that. I stop with the Elohim, simply explaining that they are not God.”

And what about the atheists?

“Some seem to be ‘packed’ inside their own scientism, and beware any who attempt to take certain convictions from them. Yet we are obliged to keep an open mind because we still know very little about our true history.”

Is it that preposterous to suggest that it comes from an initial intervention on the part of the mysterious visitors of Enoch, Noah and all the others?

And biblical figures are not the only exceptional “travelers”. The contact between Zarathustra and Ahura Mazda is not the only thing connecting heaven and earth.

There are a great many traditions that basically tell us the same story.

Someone is picked up and entrusted with transmitting valuable information, even “scientific” knowledge, that the progress of humanity will then depend on.

Like with Enoch?

Him too, of course. His story seems to be cast from the same mold as Sumero-Akkadian Emmeduranki. He also, as we know, was the “seventh patriarch” of his lineage. But instead of being responsible to the Elohim, he reports to the Anunnaki.

Anunna, Ilu, Ilanu, Elohim.

Is it always them?

The Latin dictionary of the Vatican, Biglino points out, contains an entry for “RIV”, an acronym for “Res Inexplicatae Volantes”.

In other words, UFO.

“The words ‘Aerius Viator’ and ‘Aeria Navis’, meaning astronaut and spaceship, are also present.”

Vatican Ufology?

“Let’s say linguistic updates, following the times. After all, one has to keep up, especially if the Pentagon itself is talking about Unidentified Aerial Phenomena and Israel’s former head of aerospace security talks amiably about space bases on Mars that terrestrial astronauts share with their allies from the Galactic Federation.”

Biglino gently advises those who laugh at this to take a closer look at the other source of information, the classic and universally accepted one that deals with the reconstruction of our possible origins as a species.

The truth?

Still uncertain news and very recent hypotheses.

The discovery of the Denisova, a Homo sapiens identified among some bone remains that emerged in the Altai Mountains of Siberia, dates back just to 2010.

It represents the fourth strain of our ancestors. Until 2009 there were just three: the traditional sapiens, born in south-central Africa, then the Caucasian, which is a perfected sapiens, and finally the Chinese strain.

“With Denisova we have four now, but we are talking about a discovery made just yesterday. And the experts admit that it isn’t likely, frankly, that they can be traced back to a single strain.”

And that’s not all.

“The latest discoveries of geneticists complicate matters even further. They have verified that the Denisova mixed with other species. Still bearing human DNA, but not yet identified. We literally do not know about their existence, we have only found traces of them in DNA.”

So let’s accept that we still know very little about everything concerning our origin. “This is why I insist that we keep an open mind when reading the tales of the ancients.”

The Bible, for example.

“Is it really conceivable to think that the biblical authors had all that time to waste, inventing things they couldn’t even imagine?”

Today we would call it fake news.

“But how can you possibly claim that the flying machines in the Old Testament are a hoax?”

Let’s take the Book of Zacharias, says Biglino.

There we read that the prophet was in the company of a Malach, an “angel”. To avoid any misunderstanding, Zacharias explicitly states, “I was awake, like someone who has been awakened from sleep.”

And what does he see coming? A flying Megillah.

“A Megillah is a cylinder, and the one sighted by Zachary flies like an airplane. He also describes its dimensions: ten meters by five meters.”

Soon afterwards, another flying object arrives an Ephah.

“Fortunately, ‘Ephah’ is one of those terms that no one has ever translated because no one knows how.”

So the flying Ephah arrives and lands on the ground. It has a metal hatch and when it opens, Zacharias sees a woman sitting inside.

“I raised my eyes again to observe and saw two women coming: the wind ruffled their wings, because they had wings like those of storks and they raised the Ephah between the earth and the sky.”

Zechariah asks Malach where they are taking it. And the “angel” replies, “To the land of Sumer, where they are building a platform on which the Ephah will be placed.”

“This is written in the Book of Zacharias. That the Bible speaks of things that fly is evident, beyond question.”

And if someone doesn’t like this, Biglino adds, they should at least have the intellectual honesty to say, “Yes, it’s true, the Bible does talk about flying things. But when it does, this must be interpreted.”

“Very well. But they should say that the Bible speaks of flying objects. If, though, they maintain that the Bible doesn’t speak of them, they say something that isn’t true.”

It is obvious, Biglino reasons. Exegetes are engaged in spreading doctrine, so they must necessarily interpret the text. As long as they don’t deny the evidence.

Does that happen?

It certainly does.

“For example when it is said that Zacharias had a ‘vision’.”

False?

“Of course. Zacharias clearly says he saw things that flew.”

The same thing happens with Ezekiel. He was caught up “in spirit”.

In chapter 3 of the biblical book attributed to this prophet, we read, “Then a Ruach lifted me up, and I heard behind me the sound of a great earthquake as the Kavod of Yahweh rose from that place.”

And again, still quoting from the Book of Ezekiel, “I heard the thunder of the wings and at the same time the thunder of the wheels and the noise of a great storm. The Ruach lifted me and carried me away.”

Was Ezekiel having a vision, coming into direct contact with God, having been lifted up spiritually?

“No. Ezekiel was ‘lifted’ by something that had wings and wheels and that, when rising from the ground, makes a great noise. This is what the Bible says.”

It’s not just Biglino who thinks this way.

“According to some aeronautical engineers who work with NASA, the Book of Ezekiel very clearly describes what they technically define as ‘directional engines’. What more can we say?”

And then, at a certain point during those “extraterrestrial” voyages, an unexpected element may appear: oil.

The chosen ones are at times subjected to such anointing.

Enoch, for example.

“In one of his travels, when he is brought before the ‘great leader of the empire’, the one commonly called ‘God’, Enoch ends up being ‘anointed’.”

And who physically performs this “anointing”?

Michael, the arch-strategist and ‘general of the army’ of the Elohim.

“Take Enoch,” he is ordered, “and strip him of his earthly garments, anoint him with blessed oil and clothe him with garments of glory.”

The appearance of this oil, we read, “was more than a great light, its ointments like beneficial dew, its perfume like myrrh and its rays like those of the sun.”

“I looked at myself,” the book has Enoch say, “and I was like one of the glorious ones.” So –Biglino translates – like those who were in front of the throne of the “great leader”.

This is where, the scholar observes, the concept of the anointed one, the Messiah, is introduced.

And this happens when Enoch is brought before the supreme leader.

Enoch the traveler, the one who knew “23 kinds of flying chariots”, is covered with oil from head to toe by the archangel Michael.

“This concept of the anointing,” Biglino observes, “is found again later in the New Testament with the term Christ, ‘Christos’, which in fact means ‘the anointed one’, indicating the Mashiach.”

All this, adds the scholar, has had a particular evolution over the centuries, to the point of assuming a simply symbolic meaning in the end.

“It was enough to pour two drops of oil on someone’s head to ‘anoint him king’, or ‘anoint him as Messiah’, or invest and consecrate one as a ‘special envoy’.”

Originally, however, this was not the case.

Biglino reaches for the dictionaries again. According to the Brown Driver Briggs, the verb “Meshach” means “to sprinkle” and “anoint” the body entirely and maybe even “rub” the limbs, until they are “smeared”.

Another dictionary, the prestigious Strong, explains that “Meshach” actually means imposing a rough, energetic practice.

A concept further reiterated by the Klein, a dictionary of Hebrew etymology published by the University of Haifa.

“Mashiach” means “rubbing, scrubbing”.

The Lexicon Hebraicum Veteris Testamenti, from the Pontifical Biblical Institute, also agrees, comparing the Hebrew verb to the Latin “levo, oblevo”.

This is anything but two drops of oil on the head. It was a treatment reminiscent of a sanitation procedure.

“The meaning we get from all this is that of a physical act whereby a person is taken, stripped of his clothes, rubbed, washed and finally spattered with oil in such a way as to be practically smeared with it.”

Any explanations for this?

“It looks like some kind of procedure on the part of the Elohim to keep a certain safe distance from humans and their possible diseases, bacteria, viruses. The objective was to maintain an sterile environment once one of us was introduced into their presence. Today we would say this was some sort of hygienic-sanitary preventive measure.”

Something very similar, Biglino continues, to the meticulous provisions

taken for those who entered the Temple, the earthly home of Yahweh.

This is clearly stated in Exodus, chapter 30.

“Take spices of the highest quality,” Yahweh says to Moses, detailing the doses as well: “500 shekels of liquid myrrh, 250 shekels of fragrant cinnamon, 250 shekels of fragrant reed.”

Cassia appears in other translations. And then, of course, the pressing of olives: a “hin” of olive oil is the measure requested.

“Make these into a sacred anointing oil, a fragrant blend, the work of a perfumer,” Yahweh recommends.

“The meaning of this is clear: the mixture must be the work of a skilled craftsman, capable of producing a mixture that works. This is not merely a symbolic act.”

And what is this mixture for?

“This will be the oil for the sacred unction. You will anoint the meeting tent, the Ark of the Covenant, the table and all its articles, the lampstand and its accessories, the altar of incense, the altar of burnt offering and all its utensils, and the basin with its stand.”

Everything touched by a human being that Yahweh could come into contact with, had first to be anointed abundantly with that oil.

“All the spices mentioned by Yahweh,” explains Biglino, “are well known for their antibacterial, antimicrobial and antiseptic properties.”

All clearer now?

Anyone who approached the Elohim had to be cleaned and well “oiled”, along with any objects they might handle.

“This happens to Enoch as well, the extraordinary person who travelled back and forth with the Elohim, and like Noah, ‘walked with God’. And all this happened in those centuries when the Adamites, hundreds of Adamites, all lived together in close contact with the Elohim.”

Is this unique to the Bible??

Not at all.

“In the Hebrew texts we seem to read the same tales told in the Greek myths, when they speak of the period, the famous Golden Age, when men and gods lived together.”

They lived, walked, traveled. And they flew.

“The gods of Homer flew wearing their ‘winged shoes’. And they flew very close to the ground, very much how we’d fly today with a hoverboard, a

flying skateboard.”

And Homer is not the only one to speak of those very special ‘shoes’.

“In *Aethiopica*, Heliiodorus writes that this is the reason that the Egyptian divinities were represented with their feet together. They used flying boards.”

Why be surprised by this?

After all, Biglino reiterates, this is what the ancient texts recount.

The Bible, the Book of Enoch and all the others.

“Men and the so-called gods traveled together. Occasionally the so-called gods came down and joined with men. Sometimes they chose certain privileged human beings and treated them in a special way, as in the case of the anointing of Enoch, when they brought them into their homes. They took them with them, and perhaps entrusted them with particular exclusive tasks.”

Why see them as fairy tales?

What if they were news stories of the time?

“I say let’s ‘pretend’ that what they say is true. Let’s try to trust the ancient authors, let’s ‘pretend’ that they didn’t have time to waste. Let’s pretend, then, that they recounted real events. Then we might understand that there probably was a period in the course of human history in which those things and really happened. Sometimes terrible events, but certainly very fascinating ones.”

You feel a certain affection for the magic carpet after a while, don’t you?

The panorama really changes from up there. Perspective develops. The point of view.

Once you’re wearing your “flying shoes”, it is immediately evident that, for example, Enoch and Emmeduranki seem to be the same person. The fate of these “seventh patriarchs” is virtually identical, in both the biblical and Mesopotamian contexts.

Ascension, the chosen ones’ contact with higher beings, instructions to communicate on Earth.

Is it possible not to see it?

Yes, of course. It’s very possible.

“All of Western culture is conditioned by theological thought, both directly and indirectly.”

In our case, Biglino recalls, we are told that those Mesopotamian texts are myths, fables, tales through which those peoples, in their own way,

represented, a certain origin of the universe.

“And it is this theological thinking that always tells us how the Bible, which is only a re-worked copy of those texts, is ‘truth inspired by God.’”

It’s a bold thesis.

“Yes, exactly. This is something that has always perplexed me. And that also makes me smile. It takes a lot of courage to say that the originals are fairy tales, while the copy is the absolute truth inspired by God. It takes courage to be able to sustain this for millennia.”

The Bible, the scholar summarizes, must be considered for what it is: a book that contains the history (and thus, the memories) of a family. Not of all Jewish people, but only of the descendants of the Jacob-Israel lineage.

“It is the story of the relationship they had with their governor, who is known in the Bible by the name of Yahweh, and who had been assigned to them.”

These are the facts.

What follows from there, as it were, are just very loose interpretations.

“In telling this story, in the course of an elaboration that lasted over centuries, obviously they ended up transforming this Yahweh character: first into the most important of the Elohim (the group he belonged to), and then even into the one God.”

Then came the second step, a further twisting of facts.

“In Christian theological evolution, this Yahweh became a Father God figure, as far as the character of Christ in the New Testament is concerned. But in reality, he was only the ruler of the family of Jacob.”

The Bible, Biglino insists, essentially tells us the story of that family.

“And like all books written by all peoples in throughout time, it tends to exalt the family which is the main protagonist of those events, so obviously it also exalts Yahweh, their leader.”

Yahweh, not “God”.

“Trust me, there is no trace in the Bible of the spiritual and transcendent God as we understand him. Yahweh is translated as ‘The Lord’, ‘the Eternal’, but what exactly the name Yahweh means is unknown to everyone in the world. Also because, when it was spoken, the Hebrew language did not yet exist. So we don’t even know in what language that name was originally uttered and thus written. We only know that it was put in writing several centuries later and only using consonants.”

Vowels, as we know, were added centuries later.

“But even the consonants are of uncertain origin, in this sense: they were uttered when Hebrew did not yet exist. So, I repeat, we do not know its meaning. So consider this: what value can all the interpretations, all the attributions of meaning that are given to that name, possibly have?”

So what should we do?

“The best thing is to leave it as it is, without translating it. Why on earth should we pretend to discover or derive a meaning from it? At the moment, this task extends beyond the possibilities of any serious scientifically philological application, and this applies to this term as well as to many others.”

Ultimately, however, Yahweh is not all that mysterious.

“No. If we observe him well, we discover that he is certainly neither spiritual, nor omniscient, nor omnipotent. He does not have any of the characteristics of the God elaborated by Christian theologians.”

Yahweh and His Palestinian and Mesopotamian “Colleagues”

For over two thousand years the city of Babel, also called Babylon, was the largest, most important and most beautiful metropolis of ancient Asia Minor. The Treccani Encyclopedia states this clearly. It was the natural capital of the countries of the Euphrates region. It was an imperial city par excellence, given its ideal position, on the road that leads from the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean to Syria and the Mediterranean.

“Like all the great cities of the Near East, it was inhabited by people of different nationalities, so it truly was a city of a hundred languages and a confusion of tongues.”

Babel, Babylon.

“It was located on the Euphrates, north of Barsippa and south of Sippar, in the northern part of that area. Its oldest names in Sumerian are Tin-tir (“wood of life”), or Ka-dingir (“door of the god”), and the Semitic name Bāb-ilu or Bāb-ilāni (“door of the god”, or “door of the gods”), is just a variant of this.”

And what about the mythical Tower of Babel mentioned in the Bible?

It is spoken of in Genesis, chapter 11: “The Lord said, ‘If as one people speaking the same language they have begun to do this, then nothing they plan to do will be impossible for them. Come, let us go down and confuse their language so they will not understand each other.’ So the Lord scattered them from there over all the earth, and they stopped building the city. That is why it was called Babel – because there the Lord confused the language of the whole world. From there the Lord scattered them over the face of the whole earth.”

The theological interpretation of this event is well known. God punished the pride of men, who were busy building a tower intended to reach “all the way up to heaven.”

So did humans all speak the same language?

No, sir. In the previous chapter, Genesis itself writes that the sons of Noah each had their territory and spoke their own language, one distinct from the others.

And the Tower of Babel?

Archaeology tends to call it Etemenanki. In a stone tablet dedicated to the great ruler Nebuchadnezzar, we read that it was a mammoth-sized Ziggurat – with workers who had come from both the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf to build it – in honor of the deity Marduk.

Zecharia Sitchin places the episode of the destruction of the tower “in a moment shortly before the return of Marduk to Egypt, where he was known by the name of Ra.” An event that, again according to Sitchin, can be placed between 3800 and 3450 BCE.

The Akkadian account confirms that the people of Marduk were in fact scattered. But by whom?

By Enlil, the dominant Anunna. He is the one who had forbidden “gatherings” in the area. In other words, what we seem to understand from this is that he feared alliances that were hostile to him.

“It isn’t too difficult to imagine what the real reason for abandoning the tower construction project may have been: a military attack by the powerful Enlil, a sort of political act, intended to evict Marduk, who was challenging Enlil for supremacy in the region.”

According to the Sumerian texts, Mauro Biglino summarizes, territories were divided differently after the Flood. Disputes arose, resulting in open war among the Anunnaki.

Enlil and his eldest son, Ninurta – with their faction Ishkur, Inanna, Utu – emerged as victors.

Only Enki, as agreed, was allowed to rebuild his antediluvian city of Eridu. But Marduk’s requests to rebuild his Babel (Babylon) triggered the “retaliation” of Enlil and Ninurta.

Just Sumero-Akkadian fairy tales, or traces of potential history?

According to the Bible, “the copy of the original”, that is – which, according to theological tradition, contains “truth, inspired by God” – the sabotage of the construction site of the Tower of Babel was a “punishment” inflicted by the one God.

But it is highly probable that the Jews used the story to take their revenge for their “Babylonian captivity”, changing the names of the actors (and thus the meaning of the story), but based on a script that they had drawn almost word-for-word from the story of those distant regional wars between the Mesopotamian Anunnaki. Those Anunnaki were the “cousins” of the lords of

the Kavod and the Ruach, busy challenging each other in the skies where Megillah and Ephah flew.

Ancient astronauts?

In 2016, the Iraqi transport minister Kazem Finjan al Hammami spoke at the inauguration of an airport, embarrassing those present by stating rather matter-of-factly that, “In Iraq we were already flying 7,000 years ago. Our ancestors, the ancient Sumerians, built launching pads that sent them up for space travel.”

Ziggurat, Babylon, the Gate of God: might this platform on the top of the temple of Marduk, possibly the site of the Tower of Babel, have served as an air base?

“If it eventually turns out that ‘those people’ are still here among us, and may even still be governing us through their representatives, I wouldn’t be at all surprised.”

Mauro Biglino, then, sees the Reverend Barry Downing’s thesis as a concrete hypothesis.

The thread of logic is evident. Why should our “makers” have lost track of us, their “creatures”?

Of course, over time, we seem to have gotten out of control: too numerous, capable of reproducing ourselves and “hybridized” with the “children of the Elohim”.

Genesis itself is the first to talk about all this, when it seems to reveal the fear we inspired in the Elohim. What if we had obtained the secrets of super-longevity from the Tree of Life?

Were they really afraid of us?

Like father, like son, we might conclude. Is it not true that we were made with their own Tselem?

But we are still in the realm of hypothesis, of course. Reconstructions stand only if we “pretend” that what is written in the ancient texts is true.

The reasoning only works if we “pretend” that what we read in chapter 16 of Exodus is true, when Aaron speaks to his people and, at a certain point, everyone turns to the desert and sees the Kavod of Yahweh appearing in the “cloud”.

Even in the Homeric tales, these “flying chariots”, Biglino points out, raise

a great “cloud” when they land.

“In Robert Klein’s Dictionary of Hebrew Etymology, published by the University of Haifa, the root of the term “anan” (cloud) has various original meanings, one of which is, ‘something that comes quickly to sight’ and ‘something that produces a low, continuous noise.’”

What an odd cloud, don’t you think?

“Let’s pretend that what the Book of Judges writes in chapter 11 is also true, when Jephthah, the leader of the Israelites, says to the leader of the Ammonites, “Will you not take what your god Elohim Chemosh gives you? Likewise, whatever Yahweh, our Elohim, has given us, we will possess.”

Biglino smiles. “What happens to thousands of pages of theology in the face of this perfect biblical equivalence between Yahweh and Chemosh? Thousands of pages, written to invent a monotheism that does not exist in the Bible, making the Bible say what it does not say, and hiding what it explicitly says.”

Not one, but many: Yahweh, Chemosh and all the others.

In current translations, Genesis 20:13, we read of Abraham who says, “When God made me wander far from my father’s house.”

What can be read in the interlinear Bible, intended for scholars, is quite different.

Verbatim: “How they made wander me Elohim far from the house of my father”, with the verb in the plural.

What can we deduce from this

“Simple: families must believe that it was God who called Abraham. But since scholars cannot be deceived, in the interlinear Bibles the verb is left in the plural.”

The same goes for Genesis chapter 35.

“God said to Jacob, ‘Get up, go up to Bethel and live there; build in that place an altar to the God who appeared to you when you fled there from your brother Esau.’”

To the God who appeared to you – so to that one and not to another?

“And that’s not all. In Hebrew, it is not ‘God’ who speaks to Jacob. It is always them, the Elohim. And this time there is also the article, indicating ‘that’ God, to whom Jacob must build an altar: “ha-El” – Precisely that God, and not another one. Jacob must not get confused.”

The term Elohim, the translator summarizes, probably refers to a whole

series of very material being. “They are rulers, legislators, judges. The biblical context itself tells us, time after time, who those lords were.”

The history of salvation begins with Abraham. “Leave the house of your fathers,” he is told, “and let’s set off to conquer the land of Canaan.”

“But did God truly need Abraham? Seriously. Is it conceivable that an almighty God really needed to be helped by a common mortal?”

Distortions. To Biglino, this interpretative conformism is practically magical, fantastical. What really seems like a fairy tale here is the theological version, the one presuming to downgrade the origin of the Mesopotamian tales to mythology, the very tales that gave birth to the Bible.

And is it reasonable to believe that the great keys of truth can really be contained in a book? In this case, moreover, we’re talking about a collection of scrolls and papyri, the originals of which have been lost. Texts written by human hands and incessantly corrected and re-written, over centuries, until the age of Charlemagne. The authors? Unknown.

Honestly, how can we credit the birth of a monotheism when it is based on fragments that are the work of writers we cannot even name?

These fragments, though, are often precious and astounding. Read literally, they document the vitality of a very crowded Pantheon.

“With glaring clarity, the Bible writes that Abraham followed Yahweh while his relatives followed other Elohim, whose names the Old Testament gives us.”

Chemosh, Milkom, Kosh.

And then Astarte, Dagon, Moloch and many others. Not counting Elyon and the mysterious El-Shadday, the texts also mention even Baal Zavuv and Baal Pehor.

“So I ask myself: if Abraham followed the one true God, what about his brothers, who followed the other Elohim? Were they idiots? This is what religious tradition has led us to believe, that one son was intelligent, while the others (all his brothers) were so stupid that they worshipped non-existent idols.”

Biglino’s patience wears thin.

“Is it possible that Abraham never urged his brothers to stop prostrating themselves before those stone statuettes?” It’s possible, of course. He knew very well that these weren’t stone statuettes, they were all Elohim equal to Yahweh.”

A look at Deuteronomy will suffice. In chapter 32, Biglino emphasizes, it is stated that it is Elyon, the supreme leader, who assigns the peoples to the various Elohim, and it is on that occasion that Yahweh is assigned the family of Jacob, a family said to be “scattered and weeping in the wilderness.”

It is that same biblical passage, adds the scholar, that tells us that Yahweh alone deals with them.

“It says that there was no other foreign Elohim with him. The Bible states this explicitly: there were many of them.”

By this point, the deduction is quite obvious.

“Translating the term Elohim with God – God meaning that entity to whom we have been accustomed and educated to attribute all those spiritual and transcendent characteristics – is simply wrong.”

And so?

“Since we don’t know exactly what Elohim means, and since it has a very broad semantic context, let’s not translate it. Let’s take it as it is. Since there is no philological certainty, it’s the only intellectually honest thing to do, out of respect for the Hebrew text. Let us just be mindful of what the biblical context attributes to the term Elohim each time it is mentioned. At that point, you will see that you understand everything.”

Jewish Albert Einstein identified himself as a “non-believer”, yet “deeply religious”. He explained that, “My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds.”

In other words, “I don’t try to imagine a God. I is enough for me to look at the structure of the world with amazement and admiration, to the extent that our inadequate senses can grasp it.”

So what about the Bible?

Nothing but “a collection of legends,” though “honorable” ones. “Primitive and rather infantile” legends, if interpreted to “invent” a character –the God persona – who in fact is only “an expression of human weakness,” with no relation to the origin of the universe.

The physicist envisaged the religion of the future as a cosmic religion. “It will transcend the personal God and leave dogma and theology behind. Embracing both the natural and the spiritual, it will need to be founded on a

religious sense that arises from the experience of all things, natural and spiritual, as though we are all part of an intelligent unity.”

In short, something very distant from these theological “legends”.

By the way, what are the tales they told us about the origins of life?

Mauro Biglino attempts to summarize this point in his own way.

“There is a God, minding his own business. Then one day he says, ‘Let the universe be made.’ He lets a few billion years go by, then at a certain point he says, ‘Now I shall create a being to worship and serve me.’ So he makes him, but he gives him rules, knowing full well in his omniscience that he will violate them. This is exactly what happens. And so he punishes him: ‘I created you immortal,’ he tells him, ‘but now you shall die.’”

Thousands of years go by, then something else happens.

“The same God then says, ‘Now I want to give mankind the chance to regain eternal life. How? Like this: I will send my son down there and have them kill him. Then I’ll resuscitate him, and it is through this barbaric murder that I will forgive humanity and give them back the possibility of re-obtaining eternal life.’”

Is this coherent reasoning? It’s the assassins who are being “saved”.

Not to mention the manner of that strange birth.

“This is what they tell us. God preferred to avoid a normal sexual act. How could his son be born? Easy: he sends down his spirit to impregnate a girl, but in such a way that she remains a virgin.”

A few decades go by, this his son is condemned and killed.

“And good thing, too, one might add. If they hadn’t killed him, God’s plan would have been a failure. But being omniscient, he already knew that they would murder him. So they killed him, and from that moment on he gives humanity the possibility of regaining eternal life.”

Biglino smiles.

“This is the story we’re supposed to believe. But if you say that there were flying machines in ancient times, they take you for a madman.”

Speaking of miraculous tales, are we sure they were really miraculous?

“Kaire, kekaritomene”. These are the words of archangel Gabriel, or rather the Ghever-El, when introducing himself to the Madonna.

“Hail, full of grace?”

“No. The verb ‘karitoo’ indicates physical beauty. So the correct translation is, ‘Hello, you who have made yourself beautiful’. As if to say,

‘This is why we have chosen you for this mission: because you are beautiful, physically suited to the requirement.’

Mauro Biglino has fully studied a surprising source, Jesuit Jean Daniélou, a French academic, theologian and a cardinal as well.

“Cardinal Daniélou dedicated a very in-depth study to the figure of Gabriel. For him, the Holy Spirit is the Christian transposition of the Old Testament figure of Gavri-El. So the holy spirit is Gabriel, and Gabriel is an ‘ish’, a male. The Gospel tells us that the spirit ‘covered’ Mary. Ergo, by the transitive property, it is Gabriel who ‘covered’ Mary.”

Big problem: for the Catholic religion, isn’t Gabriel supposed to be an angel?

“Of course, he’s supposed to be. But in the Bible, when Daniel sees Gabriel coming, he says, ‘I saw an ish coming’, a male individual. The reasoning is flawless. The so-called biblical ‘angels’ were figures in flesh and blood.”

Males and females.

There were many women who followed Yehoshua ben Youssef, the son of Maria and Ghevel-El.

The Gospel of Luke names them. Mary Magdalene, Joanna (wife of Chuza, Herod’s administrator), Susannah and many others.

“These were wealthy women. Luke himself says that ‘they provided for them’, Jesus and the apostles, ‘with their goods.’”

Biglino avoids subscribing to the “gossip” of the alleged love story between Jesus and Mary Magdalene, which Dan Brown drew from to trace the legendary lineage of the “Sang Real” imagined in his novel *The Da Vinci Code*.

“But,” he warns, “let’s remember that when Mary Magdalene washes Jesus’ feet and anoints them with oil, she actually seems to be performing a ritual, the so-called ‘royal anointing’ reserved for husbands. To clarify, this ritual extended to the whole body, including the genitals, and was done to facilitate sexual penetration.”

This famous Gospel passage probably alludes to the “royal” function of the Messiah, born of the mysterious encounter of the Virgin with what, for Jean Daniélou and the prophet Daniel, was a “male angel”.

“As we have seen, the Bible is full of reports that seem to refer to ‘implants’ of this kind, starting with Cain, then Noah. Even Abraham’s first

son is the fruit of an ‘insemination’. The same for Jacob and Esau. Their mother had been visited by an Elohim, as was Samson’s mother. Not to mention the mothers of John the Baptist and Jesus.”

A great preacher of universal love, or perhaps a “royal” Messiah called to free his people through a revolt?

“According to certain sources, it seems that the Romans favored the second hypothesis. We read that they sent a ‘speiran’ to arrest him, a cohort of 600 armed men. Isn’t that a bit more than necessary for the arrest of a harmless pacifist prophet?”

And this leader was surrounded by women, a fact that religious tradition later pretended to ignore, as though the presence of women might reveal a more earthly image of the male protagonists, struggling with ordinary married life.

Yet even Yahweh – according to some accounts – seems to have had his better half: Anat-Yahweh, or Anat-Yahù.

“This is never mentioned, but Yahweh’s companion was well known. She is mentioned by the Jews of Elephantine and also by those who, in the Negev, engaged in prophetic activity. Not to mention that she was well known in Lebanese Ugaritic culture.”

In the Old Testament, though, there is no trace of this hypothetical “wife” of Yahweh.

“That’s how it is. The Bible has eliminated any female presence.”

The Sincerity of the Bible, Once It Is Stripped of Myth

How does it feel to undress the Bible?

Mauro Biglino finds it fascinating. And so do his numerous readers, won over by his method.

First, forget, for a moment, about all traditional interpretations.

Second, focus on a literal reading, pure and simple, of those verses.

The result is often astounding. And there is no need of any magic carpets to imagine who knows what. The Old Testament speaks for itself, explicitly and transparently.

Stories containing echoes of other stories. They are all similar, with traces of some beings who, at some point, appear to have descended to Earth.

Special, powerful beings. Extraterrestrials? Former earthlings? Superior terrestrial civilizations that have always been present on our planet?

Creators, manipulators, geneticists. Aviators and astronauts. Warriors and despotic rulers. But scientists as well, possessing the most advanced knowledge. Special weapons and science-fiction-like technologies.

Undressing the Bible?

Yes, though it is only the frills that fall. Or rather, if it is claimed that the clothes covering it were tailor-made for a body that in fact seems to reveal a completely different form.

Once naked, the Bible is very different from how it has always been presented to us.

Its sincerity may seem scandalous when we ensure that even the rougher details are included, aspects that are completely off topic if discussing religion. An absolutely inappropriate look, with unimaginable fabrics and garments that any theological tailor's shop would reject.

And these, in fact, are the verses that are normally overlooked. When obliged to look closely at this spectacle of barbarian butchery – massacres, sacrifices and atrocious punishments – we wildly and recklessly seek to re-interpret it. It's as though we think that the biblical authors, rather than rabbis and careful copyists, were contemporary artists, symbolists, surrealist

painters and brilliant lovers of abstruse riddles and enigmas.

The volume of possible meanings that the study of the Bible has produced is immeasurable, starting with the very first lines of Genesis.

An apple that is not really there, the Nahash that is not actually a snake.

Cain and Abel?

The first was a worker of the land. The second, a guardian of flocks.

Symbology: a way to say that the permanence of agriculture put an end to the initial freedom of nomadism, to the erratic character of pastoralism, marking the beginning of civilization and thus religion. A necessary practical tool for exercising power and organizing, hierarchically, the communities of the first villages?

Land, religion and war: this is Saba Sardi's hypothesis of the origin of the system of domination.

It is certainly evocative, but the great scholar from Trieste was essentially basing his theory on archaeological and anthropological evidence, clearly not on the Old Testament.

Putting Saba Sardi aside and returning to the first two brothers of the biblical story, the interpretation of some symbology enthusiasts does not convince Mauro Biglino.

Flock-tending was "assassinated" by agriculture?

"This symbolic reading of the matter seems to contrast with the historical reality of the events," says the translator.

"Agriculture and pastoralism, while appearing to be conflicting, in fact both actively practiced, especially in those territories where the so-called sacred texts were born. It is well known that, while they couldn't do without cultivation, from a certain point on, animal husbandry was equally indispensable. The success of farmers did not at all cause the disappearance of animal breeders and herders."

Symbols, of course, are still important, even fundamental.

Symbols have the power to transmit the same message over time, They are often of ancestral, archetypal origin. They allude to very remote events, which in turn illuminate aspects of life, timeless trends and events destined to be repeated.

Mauro Biglino knows perfectly well how important symbols are. In any case, the same system we live today systematically resorts to symbolic constructions. They even affect the unconscious mind, reviving buried

memories, at times conditioning our daily behavior.

But when it comes to the Bible, a rather cumbersome problem arises.

If the Book's protagonist is not God, what happens to all the coded handles – articulated over time – that we use to grasp all the possible symbolic meanings of the Old Testament, interpreted as a “secret map” of the divine?

Premise: contemporary religion expects us to believe that at a certain point in history, the God-persona materialized among us and started talking face-to-face with some of our fellow men.

Conversely, symbolic interpretation invites us to read behind the text and between the lines, in the depths of analogical allusion. Yes, but which text? The one that has come down to us, manipulated a thousand times and re-worked by the drafters themselves, often in contradiction with each other? We are talking about men who were originally concerned with the passing on of memory, and then with gradually building a possible idea of God, manipulating the original texts, lost along with 11 whole books of the Old Testament, including the one on the Wars of Yahweh.

In other words, quicksand.

Does it make sense to build complex symbolical frameworks on all of this, as though we had authentic artefacts available to us, rather than copies that have been broadly interpolated, cut and re-written?

“Having established that we have no firm truths,” Mauro Biglino prefaces, “sometimes I have the impression that symbolic readings (esoteric, allegorical, metaphorical) are similar to theological ones.”

What does he mean by that?

“In short, in all these situations there is a tendency to cover the literal meaning of what is actually written.”

The nudity of the text, dressed in clothes that are not its own?

Exactly, says the translator. We always end up making the textuality of the biblical story less visible.

“What's more, those who engage in this kind of interpretation claim to be able to enter the minds of the ancient authors, and there are hundreds of them. They claim that they can affirm with certainty that when they said one thing, they actually meant to say, or hide, another.”

This thesis is hardly sustainable.

“If we also consider that there were very few people who knew how to read and write – so these authors in fact wrote for themselves (and they could

tell the people whatever they wanted) – it’s difficult for me to think that they were trying to hide any messages.”

One of the milestones for the symbolic-esoteric reinterpretation of the Bible is the “Zohar” (“Sefer ha-Zohar”, the Book of Splendor), a kabbalistic work of Sephardic rabbis, written in Spain at the end of the 12th century.

Mauro Biglino is perfectly aware of the literary beauty of that text, as well as its infinite charms. But he fears that it represents a false trail, if it is held to contain, safely under lock and key, who knows what truths of biblical origin, perhaps accessible only to initiates.

“I have the impression,” he says, “that the readings even of medieval Jewish scholars tended to hide the concreteness of the facts.”

And why?

“Because that would have been even more threatening to their very existence.”

In Christian Europe, in fact, the Jews were persecuted.

So the “Zohar” was possibly a deliberate misdirection?

“Hiding the extreme concreteness of the Bible may have been one of the reasons for covering concrete facts and real objectives with mystical, spiritual and transcendental elements. That concreteness would never have been accepted, in particular by Christianity but neither by Islam. These are religions that had imposed themselves in the Mediterranean world with violence and with the firm intention of destroying everything that could be a danger to them.”

The ciphered monotheism of the “Zohar” as an attempt to disguise the El of the Bible, camouflaging it amid the dominant monotheisms?

“My ideas remain hypotheses,” says Biglino. “Obviously, no possibility can be ruled out a priori. Also because, as I said, no one possesses the truth.”

So what to make of this?

“The only certainty is that the words that were written in the Bible are the words that were written. The rest belongs to imagination, or to the capacity for elaboration, of the reader or of whoever intends to disseminate their own idea, thus choosing to attribute it to the biblical authors in order to lend it an unquestionable authority.”

Undressing the Bible. Is it a tiring “job”?

It certainly is, Biglino confirms. And he’s not joking when he says he was on the verge of giving up, of throwing in the towel.

It's understandable.

You end up having everyone against you. Everyone feels like you're taking something away from them.

The religious and the faithful, the symbolist and the esoterist.

A work of demolition that is systematic, but involuntary and inevitable. It's what happens when you stop believing in a closed box that contains only what you are told it contains. Theological, symbolical, allegorical.

What does the text actually describe in the original Hebrew?

A completely different story.

Biglino opened that box. And he has never closed it.

"This type of project, which I worked on for a few years, brought me into direct contact, let's say, with the very origins, with the etymology of each individual word. Terms that, time after time, are put back into the context of the stories. Words that gave birth to a mosaic that is totally different from what is traditionally told to us."

He started doing this in 2010. Then he began to publish everything he thought he was really reading in the Masoretic Hebrew codex.

"And so I poured out my doubts, my perplexities, my questions on paper. I expressed my feelings, in describing what was coming out of it. And always with a precise method: 'let's pretend that it's true.'"

In other words, "Let's pretend" that what is written in the Bible is true.

So... is it true?

"Who knows? No one can guarantee it."

So, let's pretend that it is.

"To be clear, it is not a playful method. In my opinion, though, it is the only proper one, precisely because we cannot be sure that what is written in the Bible is true. We do not possess the original codices. We only have copies of copies of copies, continually re-worked over time."

This is confirmed by the biblical scholars of the Jewish universities themselves, such as those in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv.

"If there is one thing we can be sure of, it's that the texts we have today are not the ones that were originally compiled, because every time they re-wrote them, they changed them."

And this is certainly not just a biblical anomaly or exclusive to the Old Testament.

"Naturally, this applies to all ancient texts, not just the Bible. So where's

the problem? The Bible is the only one on which a system of religious thought has been built, thought that claims to be the bearer of absolute, unquestionable truths.”

This is the real anomaly, and this really is exclusive.

“If we accept the Bible for what it is and treat it accordingly, like the Iliad and the Odyssey, there’s no problem. If, however, we want to mine out absolute truths, then I say that we should at least go and see what the text says. ‘Let’s pretend’ that what is written is true. And let’s see what comes of that.”

This is the fruit of the Biglino method, the result of long and patient work, offered to the readers.

“Basically I say, ‘This text, later interpreted for other purposes by various theologies of different origins, must in fact be separated from those intentions and be simply read again, just like all other ancient sources.’”

The problem?

“It arises when we want to consider the text as unique in the history of humanity because it was ‘inspired by God.’ And unfortunately (I say ‘unfortunately’ for those who believe) the Bible simply isn’t.”

Mauro Biglino extracts an incontrovertible truth from his textual reading.

“The Bible does tell us some things, but to have it talk about God, we need to make it say completely different things.”

The idea of a personal God, Einstein said, is an anthropological concept that cannot be taken seriously.

“God is ingenious, but not disingenuous,” added the author of The Theory of Relativity, playing with words a little.

“I cannot conceive of a God who rewards and punishes his creatures, or who possesses a will of the kind that we recognize in ourselves.”

Mauro Biglino cannot believe in such a God, either; one who institutes scoring competitions, encouraging or condemning humanity.

“In any case, there’s nothing to fear. If you read the Bible, there is no chance of mistaking it. That, in fact, is not God.”

Reading the Bible, Biglino says, is enough to understand that the Bible never talks about God.

“There is no need to invent anything, you can understand everything. It’s

when you make it speak of God that you have to start fabricating things. You've got to develop allegories, symbolisms and anthropomorphisms, come up with a whole series of cultural and interpretative categories, ones that do not exist in the Bible. They came from the outside, over centuries."

The Bible is very clear, Biglino reiterates: very concrete.

"It is just a matter of cleaning up the text."

To undress the Bible, in fact.

"Yes. Scrape off all the incrustation that has formed over the millennia, superimposing an idea of Greek-Hellenistic thought that had nothing to do with the culture of the ancient Jews, with ancient Semitic culture."

In Mauro Biglino's study, with the windows overlooking his Alpine valley, thousands of books seem to be suggesting simple truths in all their nakedness.

One of these truths is the systematic manipulation of the Old Testament.

"If we want to point fingers, one great fault was taking Hellenistic Greek thought, particularly Platonism and Neoplatonism, and forcing it into that text, whose culture of origin is completely different. This is not Platonic idealism, but the concreteness of Semitic thought and culture, which has nothing to do with the foundations of the Greco-Hellenistic culture."

This is a culture expressed in a language that does not even contemplate the word God, just as it does not know the words soul, spirit and eternity.

"This really was a great crime. But I also realize that, had they not done this, it would't have been able to proceed with the construction of the theological system that was later presented to us."

Pure fantasy?

"Et solum superest sepulchrum." This is what is written on a headstone in a funerary chapel, a family tomb.

"The only thing that remains is the tomb."

Only the grave remains; not the soul, not the spirit.

Is this the testament of an atheist?

"Not at all. Those words were sculpted in 1870 by an ancestor of mine. He signed his name 'Biglino Blasius'. He also wrote 'cogitanti vilescunt omnia,' meaning, for the ones who think, all things lose their value. Or rather, they regain their real value once they are liberated from the superfluity that we are so accustomed to attributing to the reality that surrounds us. A profound thought: remember the biblical 'vanitas vanitatum' of Ecclesiastes."

Guido Ceronetti's translation is unforgettable: everything is empty nothing.

And how does that sound in a cemetery?

“The awareness of death quietly invites us to give the right value to things.”

Memento mori: “Et solum superest sepulchrum.”

“Oh, I forgot: my ancestor Blasius Biglino was a priest, as well as a canon and theologian.”

The Mystery of God Does Not Dwell in the Old Testament

Fiat lux.

At the Abbey of Saint Michael, the light gushes. The sheer vastness of the view is utterly breathtaking. The Pirchiriano peak dominates a wind-swept expanse composed of snow-capped summits and rich history. It overlooks a valley floor, barred by the Lombard Locks in the era of Charlemagne.

Mauro Biglino never tires of admiring the long horizon that opens for embrace upon reaching the top of the mountain, after an hour's rigorous hike.

There in the background, to the west, at the foot of the Italian-French Alpine mountain range, Susa has stood for two millennia. This was the outpost of the Caesars on the road to the Gauls.

The Arch of Augustus, the Roman Arena and the remote memories of Constantine, who besieged Maxentius in those mountains.

Constantine the Great, the emperor who would later legitimize the new religion.

“In hoc signo vinces”: the legend of the apparition of the cross in the sky above the Milvian Bridge. Other legends, reported even by the History Channel, place that “prodigious” celestial sighting in the Susa Valley.

More than a supernatural event, was it perhaps an extraterrestrial manifestation? In a certain sense, it's only logical. The cross in the sky magically appeared on the top of the Musinè, a natural pyramid at the bottom of the valley, which has always sparked the imagination of ufologists.

Seen from the Abbey, the Musinè stands silhouetted against the blue.

“I practically live across the street from it,” Biglino smiles. “And believe me, in all these years I have never seen anything strange. No lights, no flashes, no ‘flying chariots’. Absolutely nothing, ever, not even by accident.”

It is other things that attract our translator-mountaineer. For example, the cave of Celle, on the spur facing the Pirchiriano. This was the secluded lair of the hermit Giovanni Vincenzo, the man to whom Mikael, the arch-strategist, one day introduced himself, asking him to erect the imposing place of worship.

Behind the Abbey, among birch woods frequented by wild boars and roe deer, a series of standing stones appears. Stone blades and strange megaliths, arranged in a line as though indicating some strange energy, at least considering what we imagine the ancient wisdom of the Celtic priests must have been.

Speaking of energy, according to scholars, the end of 2020 saw a sharp increase in the frequency of the so-called “earth harmonics”, readable as Schumann resonances.

In practice, this is the natural resonance of the Earth, discovered by the German physicist Winfried Otto Schumann half a century ago, translating the constant electromagnetic emission coming from our planet into a mathematical formula.

It is said that the first to identify that frequency (7.83 Hertz) were the Rishis, ancient Indian seers, recognized for having codified “Om”, the so-called primordial vibration.

“In the beginning was the Word,” as John would say.

Heavens and stars: according to Hindu mythology, the Rishis went up to heaven (they “ascended” as well), to then be transformed into stars of Ursa Major.

Giordano Bruno comes to mind, when he called the planets “animals”, considering them to be living beings, endowed with a soul.

Is the heartrate of this “big animal” hosting us – the one that, for the sake of convenience, we continue calling Earth – really getting faster?

Some venture even further out on the limb, perhaps chasing a great dream. What if what the mystics are talking about – powerful energies, a loving cosmic spirit, mysterious relationships with the absolute – were an enormous field of intelligent energy?

An immensity called God?

This is a problem that presents a constant challenge to theoretical physics and specialists in quantum mechanics. Can we imagine the universe as a single, gigantic living being, made up of innumerable energies, capable of aggregating to create an infinite range of interconnecting frequencies and shapes?

Finding out how these energies interact with each other, it is supposed, might mean making the greatest of all discoveries: the secret of life.

Airy thoughts, which at the Abbey of Saint Michael seem to become even

bluer, light as a feather.

For Max Plank, the father of quantum mechanics, matter is only condensed energy and interconnected vibration.

And what about human beings?

According to biologist Rupert Sheldrake, we are living systems inserted into even more complex systems, in a universe made up of vibratory structures.

Structures that function like strings, according to astrophysicist Michio Kaku.

Everything is connected, correlated. Nikola Tesla and Ettore Majorana knew this as well.

A powerful, endless harmony, as marvelous as the emotions that the molecules photographed by Masaru Emoto seem to show us: the memory of water, its “emotional intelligence”.

Fantastic? Absolutely.

But what does Yahweh have to do with all this?

The question is direct: a brutal quantum leap.

Up there, the stars. Down here, the Sinai.

What relationship is there between the prospective God of the Universe and the Lord of the Kavod, the one who fought over pastures with his “colleagues” Milkom and Kamosh, to then share sheep and girls with them?

“Drop it,” Mauro Biglino quips. “It’s better that way.”

“Weren’t we talking about the Bible?”

In its immense grandeur, the Abbey erected in the name of the archangel Michael is best admired comfortably seated at a table in a café.

A glass of red wine is ideal after a good trek. And if you are in the company of Mauro Biglino, even a simple toast can go a long way.

“Do you know that red wine is rich in resveratrol?”

It is a phenol, rich in antioxidants and anti-inflammatory properties.

“Well, they recently discovered something else as well. Resveratrol seems to prevent the bone pathologies caused by extended stays in space.”

Here we go again? Figure it out.

“Consider that after the Flood, the first thing they did was plant vineyards.”

Good times. It was the Golden Age, when men and gods walked the earth

together.

“Where, though, does the importance of gold come from, historically?”

Not an insignificant question

“Someone still has to explain to me how the usefulness of gold ever occurred to Paleolithic man, and how they managed to figure out how to extract it. With what technologies? You certainly can’t hope to melt rocks by burning wood to mine the gold.”

Besides, what possible use could they have had for the noble metal?

“Certainly not to make weapons; too fragile.”

But gold, as we know, is useful for technology. It is an excellent conductor.

“All the ancient texts tell us that it was specifically ‘those others’ who needed the gold.”

This most precious of metals has many special properties.

“Gold hinders bacterial proliferation. Even Yahweh knew something about that. He in fact had everything overlaid with gold. And he made sure that the Jews took quite a lot with them when they left Egypt. Once they reached their destination, he had it delivered to him at the Temple – in his house, that is – to keep a close eye on it.”

The Abbey glows, solitary and majestic.

From up there, there is truly the impression of a universe that beats and breathes.

The vibration of the Earth: the subtle music of infinity, the beauty that surrounds us.

In the clear air, the great wings of the kite play with the wind.

Flying as well are the final words of Mauro Biglino, the man who, without intending to, revealed the naked Bible.

Probing each word, interrogating them. Going beyond conventions. Seeking the most authentic flavor of something that has spoken to us, shining, for millennia. The gold of time, of legend. And the other gold: possible truth.

“This news just came out. They have discovered mines in Namibia that date back 150,000 years. I wonder which hominid could dig into those rocks to extract gold?”

It is useless to look for an answer.

Much better is a nice glass of wine, with a healthy dose of resveratrol, at the foot of the sanctuary of Archangel Michael.

ELOHIM, NOT GOD: A LITTLE GLOSSARY

*Words to be replaced in order to read the Bible
while respecting the authors of the Old Testament.*

“Basically, it is useful to make these substitutions when reading the Bible in common translations,” explains Mauro Biglino. These, he prefaces, are very simple indications: “In making these replacements, it is not even necessary to ask about the meaning of the terms. It is enough to carefully read the context of the inserted words.” At that point, “everyone will have the surprising personal sensation of understanding who or what they are talking about.” In any case, the meaning of these terms is accurately reported and philologically explained in Biglino’s books. The author, however, does not want to condition the reader. He prefers to suggest that readers limit themselves to making these simple substitutions, “which respect the biblical text without other types of influences or considerations.”

God

When you find the word “God”, replace it with “Elohim”. Although the word “Eloah” (or “El”) is sometimes found in Hebrew, this substitution helps to understand who it is we are really talking about.

Lord, Eternal

When you find the word “Lord” or “Eternal”, replace it with “Yahweh”.

Most High

When you find the term “Most High”, replace it with “Elyon”.

Angel, Angels

When you find the term “Angel” (or “Angels”) replace it with “Malach” (or, in the plural, “Malachim”).

Spirit of God

When you find the term “Spirit of God”, replace it with “Ruach of the Elohim”.

Glory of God

When you find the term “Glory of God” (or “of the Lord”, “of the Eternal”), replace it with “Kavod of the Elohim” or “Kavod of Yahweh”.

Eternity

When you find the term “Eternity”, replace it with “Olam”.

Omnipotent

When you find “Omnipotent” or “Almighty”, replace it with “El-Shadday”.

The authors

Mauro Biglino

Translator of 19 books of the Old Testament for the prestigious Edizioni San Paolo, Mauro Biglino is an author, essayist and scholar of the history of religions who has been well known to the general public since 2010 with the publication of his first astonishing textual re-reading of the Bible, through 14 highly successful essays.

His work has earned him a great many enthusiasts, scholars and ordinary readers, whom he has guided – without prejudice or theological filters – through the fascinating narration of the biblical verses, examined in the original Hebrew. Biglino has worked with countless experts (biologists, archaeologists, engineers and doctors) who have supported his hypotheses regarding the possibility that the Bible contains evidence of the true origin of humanity, literally “manufactured” by a group of non-terrestrial individuals, the Elohim, subsequently transformed into divinities, starting with the first of them, Yahweh, who in the Old Testament is merely the “governor” of the Israelites, one of the many Jewish families.

A scholar of various ancient languages, Biglino has drawn suggestive parallels between the biblical narrative and contemporary traditions, from Egyptian to Vedic-Indian, passing through Greco-Roman culture, Homeric literature and the mysterious “biblical” traces that are so plentiful in the toponymy of the Baltic Sea.

In 2016, Biglino addressed his themes in a memorable meeting with both Christian and Jewish theologians. His position is clear. “I have never dealt with the transcendent God. I limit myself to observing that he is not present in the Bible.”

His essays have been translated into English, Spanish, French, German, Portuguese, Dutch, Czech, Serbo-Croatian and Latvian. Over the past ten years, Mauro Biglino has worked tirelessly to inform and educate,

disseminating his message in hundreds of conferences and participating in international conventions. Since 2020, all of his videos – viewed by millions of from all over the world – are collected on his YouTube channel: “Mauro Biglino Official Channel”.

Giorgio Cattaneo

Giorgio Cattaneo has worked as a journalist, screenwriter, playwright and author of documentaries. He has collaborated with the famed journalist Giulietto Chiesa and has met people like Mikhail Gorbachev and the Pakistani leader Benazir Bhutto. He contributed to the draft of the film *Siberian Education*, by Oscar-winning Director Gabriele Salvatores and took part in the making of the documentary *Qui*, by Daniele Gaglianone.

He published the novel *A Valley at the bottom of the Wind* (Aliberti) and the mini-stories *The Lottery of the Universe* (Youcanprint). For the publisher Graffio, he has published “Acts of Light”, a poetic portrait of the artist Tino Aime. He wrote the play *Ak, the Chant of the Cathars*, performed in 2006 with Eugenio Allegri and the participation of Cochi Ponzoni, the writer Maurizio Maggiani and the singer Antonella Ruggiero, for whom he (together with Gilberto Richiero) wrote the song “Niente di Noi” (Nothing of Us), for her album *When I was a Singer*.

“Encountering Mauro Biglino’s work,” he says, “is a deeply healthy, stimulating and inevitably destabilizing. It forces us to reconsider the solidity of the awareness that nourishes many of our common beliefs. And it is a testament to the courage that is needed, today more than ever, to claim the full dignity of free research.”