

REALITY EXPLAINED FROM PARMENIDES TO HERACLITUS: AN INSIGHT INTO THE NATURE OF THE CHRISTIAN GOD

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ABSTRACT

This paper focuses on the positions maintained from Parmenides to Heraclitus in explaining reality though with much favour to that of Heraclitan view especially as it concerns the nature of the Christian God. Many theories have interpreted reality in different ways to suit and protect their tenets or doctrines, but which appears contradictory to logic. The implications in such interpretations are haphazardness and non-inclusiveness. At this, questions arise: is reality viewed partly or holistically? Is reality identified by change or permanence, and how can one explain the other and vice versa, and in respect to the nature of God? However, applying comparative, expository and evaluative methods, the paper insists that reality is all-encompassing and holistic, and is expressed in both the Heraclitan and Parmenidan positions.

Keywords: Reality, Parmenides, Heraclitus, Nature, God

Introduction

The question about 'reality' or 'what is' has taken the central stage of philosophy right from the ancient times. Many thinkers have rendered their interpretative voices of dissent to it from different angles and perspectives. This means that the argument and interpretations are not exclusively peculiar to philosophy but to every discipline. In the quest to explain reality, the central characteristic feature is 'empiricism' and 'idealism.' These are the two strands of all knowledge. For some, reality is entirely empirical/visible, hence *change*, for others, it is entirely ideal/invisible, hence *permanence*, whereas for many others, it is a combination of both natures. However, in this paper, we will examine few outstanding ancient thinkers whose voices on the nature of reality, we will stand and retrospectively get an insight into the nature or reality of the Christian God. We have to go back to the ancient time to start from the beginning and the beginners. Historically as we have been made to understand today through documentation, these two strands of knowledge began with Heraclitus and Parmenides on whose ideas we will take off. In this regard, it therefore calls for necessity to give a brief background to each of them and as to why their ideas are the cradle to this claim.

Heraclitus (540-470 BC)

Heraclitus was the son of Bolson from Ephesus- a city of Iona in Asia Minor. He was often referred to as “The Obscure” for the difficulty in holistic comprehension of his texts; “The Riddler” for his ability of using hard-to-understand-questioning-words as a 'language game' (if I may borrow that from Wittgenstein) (Barnes, 2000:48) and “The Weeping” or “The Dark” Philosopher because “he purposely made his works and fragments inaccessible to the common mind as evidenced in his preservation of his work *On Nature* in the temple of the goddess- Artemis, to be available only to the philosophically-oriented minds,” and finally “The Apostle of Change” because of his belief in *change* (Eneh, 2001:178-180). He was influenced by Homer whom he considered as an Astrologer and Archilochus and Hesiod whom he sees as a great tutor of very many, but critically wondered why these people did not know that much learning is not much knowledge. It is from his self-knowledge through empirical observations about things, and in reaction to his contemporary, Parmenides, that prompted his empirical knowledge and subsequent position that change underlies reality.

Heraclitus' Thought

Heraclitus summed up his philosophical conceptions on three outstanding points which include (1) That Reality is Change (2) That the substantial nature of Fire holistically explains Reality (3) That Peace, Progress and Continuity of Reality are found in the Principle of Opposition. Be that it may be, just like every other ancient Western thinker whose thoughts were cosmologically focused where they were trying to respond to the One Big Question- “What is Reality or What is the Nature of Reality or What is it that is Real?”, Heraclitus gave his own quota. For him, what is real, is 'Change.' Stressing this position, Unah (2010:44) insists that for Heraclitus,

What is real about the world is not some entity or stuff that remained changeless, but the cosmic principle of change. In other words, everything in the world undergoes a process of change. The only thing that is really permanent about the world... is change. Everything is in a state of perpetual flux. They come into being and they pass away. Only change is a permanent feature of the world

It is thus crystal clear that for Heraclitus, “permanence is an illusion; only change is real.” We can infer that physical science and other natural sciences are offshoots of his thought. In a conclusive view, his position is nothing but the insistence that anything that is, is guided by the principle of change. Thus, that which is eternal and permanent in the universe is change and not permanence or number or any some stuff of any kind. Anything that is, obeys change as the fundamental reality. To bring his idea to lime light he employs a technical analysis with *water*. For him, anything that is, “is in a constant flux and if one jumps into a body of water twice, he cannot meet the same water because the water is always flowing” (Ozumba, 2009:88-9), hence in his own words, “all things flow.” He employs a Greek concept *pantarhei* to explain this, and for him, “you cannot step twice

into the same rivers, for fresh waters are ever flowing in upon you.” Exhibiting his obscurity, in an attempt to explain change, he says that “in the same river, we both step and do not step; we are and we are not” (Eneh, 2001:182) for the second we are, we are no more the same for reality (change) acts even million times within a second. Even more enthusiastic was his student- Cratylus who goes deeply further arguing that you cannot even step into the same water once let alone twice. At this, we could infer that events follow change as they existentially features in the ever unfolding reality. This may have brought an intellectual influence on Russell who has always insisted and identified reality as *events* which keep unfolding and making histories in people's existence. In his words, “what has been thought of as a particle will have to be thought of as series of events” (Omoregbe, 1994:136-7). However, for Heraclitus, the “only permanent feature of the world... is change.” Put in another way, “everything is in constant flux, nothing abides in the world, nothing is, nothing is stable or permanent, only change is real, all is a continuous passing away” (Eneh, 181).

It is noteworthy that Heraclitus was not the only “Apostle of Change.” As at the Constantine (6th century BC) when Heraclitus was proclaiming this in Greece, Buddha coincidentally was busy proclaiming same in India. In this regard, Omoregbe has this to say:

While Heraclitus was saying this in Greece, Buddha was saying virtually the same thing... in India. Buddha tells us... that we live in an ever changing world that even the very elements that constitute the human being are continually changing. Thus, both within us and in the physical world outside us, the basic feature is continuous change. Buddha points out that it is ignorance of this fact that leads man to desire permanence in an impermanent world, seeking permanence in an ever-changing world, thereby going against the very nature and system of the world. This is the root cause of human suffering on earth, namely, ignorance of the true nature... of the world (1994:136)

It could be deductible that Buddha was even more ridiculous to those who say that reality is nothing but permanence for this is in exact contrary to what is to be. For him, looking for permanence in an impermanent universe is an intellectual mistake which people make. This could be the reason as a forerunner of natural and physical science, Heraclitus holds so strong to self-research and knowledge. Hence man understands when he partakes in self-involved research. Identified very closely with change is the *Logos*, the Universal Reason from which man draws reasoning ability. By this, reasoning is universal to any man. In his words, “thinking is common to all” (Eneh, 2001:180), it is left for man to apply self-knowledge, the search of the mind to discover it.

To describe change as unity in diversity, Heraclitus posits that there must be something which its nature exactly explains how change takes its course on anything that is, and that, according to him, is 'Fire.' His reason for using the core trait of fire to explain the nature of reality (change) is that

fire behaves in such a way as to suggest how the process of change operates. Fire is simultaneously a deficiency and a surplus; it must constantly be fed and it constantly gives off something either in the form of heat, smoke or ashes. Fire is a process of transformation then, whereby what is fed into it is transformed into something else (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003:15)

So, Heraclitus “likens the universe to an everlasting fire. Whatever you put into fire, the fire burns to bring about another thing. And nothing is lost in nature.” That is to say that “fire lives by consuming and transforming into itself matter that is not fire. Fire can change many different things into itself” (Ejeh, 2010:16-7). In attempt to explain the transformative nature of fire in order to portray change as the true reality that is, Heraclitus says that “fire lives the death of earth, and air the death of fire; water lives the death of air, earth that of water” (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003:16). Fire is the reality which replicates the principle of change and as well could be used to explain the reality of change. It explains “the basic reality in nature. Fire... is both that “something” which changes and the principle of change itself. Everything is in flux, means for Heraclitus, that the world is an “ever-living fire” whose constant movement is assured by “measure of it kindling and measure going out” (Aghamelu, 2005:57). We must not forget that this law of nature or elemental fire governs the universe and men; hence, “all things are an exchange for fire and fire for all” (Eneh, 181). Therefore, the universe and its orderliness were never made by the gods or men but “ever-living fire being kindled in measure and quenched in measure” too. Heraclitus identifies fire with the *One*, which he finally conceptualizes with God. Could this be drawn from the African conception of God as the *Sun* (Universal Eye); that is *the eye* which oversees all that happens on earth? Today, the Universal One and fire which sources life is the Sun. if the conception is true, what possibly could have happened to man without the Sun, the Universal Fire?

Having insisted that reality is change which portrays the whole essence of 'difference,' and equally applying the whole constant flux-nature of fire to essentially support this claim, the implication gives rise to the third point which is the belief that in the principle of opposition found peace, development and the continuity of whatever that is. For him, “everything is born in strife; the world is an ever living fire, kindled in measure and quenched in measure.” In his idea of forces of tension and strife, Heraclitus is of the view that “*Strife is the very essence of change itself.*” The point deducible here is that opposites like good and evil, order and disorder, normal and abnormal, healthy and sick, wet and dry, war and peace are all the very essence, nature and substance of reality. They are not calamitous but the way reality naturally is. Thus, “what is in opposition is in concert, and from what differs comes the most beautiful harmony” (Aghamelu, 2005:57). Some people have already accused Heraclitus of encouraging war, conflict and violence in the society. This of course appears truthful but the point remains that his idea contains an element of truth for the adage goes that “not until a land is tussled for, the real owner is not yet known.” For Heraclitus, “war is common and right is strife and all things happen by strife and necessity” (Hyland, 1973, Eneh, 2001:90, Eneh, 2001:180). This means that war is the

father of all and strife is justice. War is both king of all and father of all, it has revealed some men as gods, others as men, some it has made slaves and others as free (Eneh, 2001:180). Through opposition therefore, the reality in a thing comes to lime light and this is the real state of man today- the Survival of the Fittest. This ideology may have influenced the *dialectists* like Hegel, Marx, etc, because for them, a contrary to a “given” gives rise to another thing and from there, gives rise to another, and so, conflict and disagreement becomes the real nature, essence and substance of life and its procedural continuity. Heraclitus so perceives struggling and conflict as the basis of equilibrium since they are good in themselves. Opposition is the source of life, human progress and the reality of continuity for if all agrees, there ends the whole thing, but opposition sees or calls for a tangible reason for the continuity of the process hence opposition and discord see for harmony and concord. Heraclitus is not the only one who has held such view at high esteem, other thinkers (Eneh, 2001:89-127) like Pythagoras, Empedocles, the Atomists, Machiavelli, and even those who practically lived it like Hitler, etc. also hold on the reality of the principle of opposition as the source of life and continuity of whatever that is. However this ideology goes in contrary to the views of some thinkers like Homer, Anaximander, Socrates, Buddha, Mo-Tzu, Jesus Christ, some Existentialists, the Quakers, Gandhi, Luther King Jnr, Henry Thoreau, etc.

Parmenides (515-450 BC)

Parmenides, the son of Pyres from Elea- an ancient Greek foundation and colony founded by Greek refugees in the Southwestern Italy, was believed to be a younger contemporary of Heraclitus. He was influenced and led to calm by Ameinias, “son of Diochaites, the Pythagorean, a poor man but of good character” and Pythagoras, the Samosian whom he saw as a worthy man and who has ever held that number is the reality behind anything that is. Parmenides taught Zeno- his fellow Eleatic, rhetoric, dialectic and logical philosopher of no-change (Barnes, 2000:77).

Parmenides' thought

Based on the account of his thought (Ozumba, 2009:90), Parmenides was considered “the first philosopher to introduce the concept of being” when he said that “being is” and this, he described as the “principle of identity”. In his treatise, *Principle of Excluded Middle*, he made it clear that “being is and non being is not. And from non being, you cannot get being.” In his logical effort, he has succeeded in formulating the “Principle of Contradiction/Non-Contradiction” when he posited that “a thing cannot both be and not be at the same time and in the same respect.” Being the first to address the problem of being- the central taproot of metaphysics/ontology, Omoregbe (1994:135) renders his own submission thus: “If metaphysics is understood to mean the study of Being, or the philosophy of Being, the Parmenides was really the first great metaphysician in ancient Greece... he was the first philosopher in the West to articulate the problem of Being in the 6th century B.C in his poem “On Nature.”” In *On Nature* where he espoused his idea of Being, Heraclitus opines that there are two ways to reality: 'The Way of the Senses' which he identifies as the 'Way of Opinion'; and 'The Way of Reason' which he identifies as the 'Way of Truth.' These Parmenidean 'Ways' could philosophically signify 'Empiricism' and

'Idealism/Rationalism' respectively. In his own analysis, the 'Way' of the senses does not lead to the Truth hence it is not reliable in the pursuit of the Truth for it changes; but the 'Way' of the reason leads to the Truth hence it is reliable in the pursuit of the Truth for it changes not. In his own words, it reads: “You must learn all things, both the unwavering heart of well-rounded truth and the opinions of mortals in which there is no true warranty” (Simplicius, 557₂₄.558₂).

Heraclitus, according to Parmenides, espoused his thought in the way of the senses and that was why the truth he got was *Change* itself which indubitably suggests the multiplicity of reality in space and time. But that is not what reality really is according to Parmenides. Reality for him is Permanence, Changelessness, the One. It is Eternal, Indivisible and in nature Single, but “if more things than one exists, then they must be both similar and dissimilar” (Plato, ₁₂₇A-₁₂₈D). That was a smart logical consistence to deny change and multiplicity of reality. Reality found on the way of reason, for him, is epistemically reliable and well formed. It does not change; hence the core and indisputable nature of reality here implies One- Permanence. So, for Parmenides, truth/reality is 'Permanence' not Change; hence the implication of singularity-nature of truth or reality, and only reason leads to it. His thought according to Ekeh (2010:19) is conclusively simplified thus: “Being is, and non-being is not, and only the unchanging belongs to the world of Being. Being is one and cannot be plural. Multiplicity in being is just an illusion, like change or becoming is illusion.” To elaborate this, the implication is that being “is one, eternal, uncreated without beginning and end. It is homogenous, independent of place, perfect, indivisible, unique, self-identical and unchanging.” This therefore follows that “whatever is other than being is not, not-being is nothing whatever... being is one and permanent.” One can confidently say that his philosophy is drawn from his idea of the 'Way of Reason' (idealism/rationalism) which he believes is the only real way to the Truth, hence it is written: “On the basis of truth or reason, he recognizes that truth is attained by reason while opinion or belief is reached by the senses which are not the guides to truth. Since senses can mislead people in arriving at truth... reason must be relied upon for truth” (Ekeh, 2001:184). Reason for him is epistemically perfect and superior to senses for the truth (being) it reveals is Singular/One and Unchanging, while the one of the senses is Multiple, changing and deceptive which are all epistemically illusory, unreal and characteristically 'non being' which does not exist. In juxtaposition, the Mystic Epistemic Doctrine goes in line with Parmenides' position for the “striking and interesting feature of mysticism which cannot be ignored is that mystics of very diverse cultural, religious and philosophical backgrounds and different historical epochs... agree on one thing, namely, that *reality is one*... that all distinctions and separations between one thing and another cease” (Omeregbe, 1994:135). Parmenides therefore “was more persuaded by logical reasoning than what he saw with his eyes” and that was why he “offered the quite startling theory that the entire universe consists of one thing, which never changes, has no parts and can never be destroyed. He calls this single thing the One” (Stumpf & Fieser, 2003:18). However, a conclusion deducible from his philosophy is the fundamentality of reason to senses and a very criticality of mind on

belief and opinions as ways to truth. People have been misled from the 'real' because of (religious or personal) beliefs which lack logical, critical and reasonable basis, and for Parmenides, such occurrences could happen because the way to the truth was through sense and not reason. In his philosophy, be it as it may, we can see his idea of the 'Way of Truth' and the 'Way of Opinion/Belief' representing “the usual basis of philosophical system of thought: rationalism and empiricism.” By inferring that Heraclitus' philosophy follows the 'Way of Opinion/Belief' in reaching to the Truth which consequently lands him to identify 'Reality' as 'Change,' he acknowledges the Heraclitean fatherhood and foundation to Physical and Natural Sciences. We can equally say that the Christian Religion is highly influenced by Parmenidean philosophy which prompts the Christians to strongly hold and believe that God's nature is motionlessness or changelessness. Apparently, his cherished student- Zeno went even farther to deny change/motion by postulating four paradoxes which include (1) The paradox of Achilles and the Tortoise (2) of the Racecourse (3) of the Arrow (4) of the Relativity of Motion.

Having a critical look on the Ephesian thought (Heraclitus') and the Eleatic thought (Parmenides'), it is observable that they are at intellectual war- each philosophizing at the extreme and in very contradiction to each other. They generated the problem which contemporary philosophers, from then till today, are still battling with, of which many ranging from Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Locke, Descartes, et al, have proffered their own reconciliatory solutions to.

Christian Idea/Position on God and (His) Nature

To begin this analysis, it is very pertinent as a matter of fact, to state that no one has seen God to know the proper gender- whether *he* or *she* or *it* or even *they*- of God. This is the rationale behind the position of some gender-minded persons who have argued that it is gender insensitivity and cheat on women particularly to identify God with an He, Him and His, in major texts especially the Christian Holy Book, the Bible. However, for the Christians, the most basic knowledge, belief and nature of God is that God is One, Eternal, Everywhere and NEVER Changes. He is attributed other 'names' based on his *generosity, magnanimity, kindness, mercifulness* and His manifestations in *different ways*, means and aspects and many others. To some, these are not just mere 'names' of God, but expressions about God's nature, essence and substance or who He really is. Here lies the problem because sometimes, we hear and call God names that contradict who we say He really is. At this, we are called for serious and deep critical reflections on them vis-à-vis God's reality or nature. Some of these names are logically, religiously and reasonably fallacious, substantially meaningless or negative to God's nature as we say and finally portray God incomplete, imperfect, rigid, merciless, static, incapable and one of the smallest beings that exists.

Nevertheless, we will start this critical and deep evaluation with an outstanding name or God's attribute which is, for instance, *Unchangeable Changer*. We do not know who God is, and following this, we do not know what He is or made of. But if we assume that God is whatever He is, but not man, animal, tree, or water, among other existents, how possible is

it that He makes what He is not? Some may criticize here by asking why and how could man make things that he is not. Man makes these things because he is imperfect, he changes million times within a second and finally is incomparable to God. It could even be possible that man may become a lower animal, say goat or dog or dove one day, after all, he sometimes behaves unreasonable that his conduct is compared to those of these mentioned lower animals. But how come God, who is Perfect, Unchanging and One (with one Substance if logically followed to an end) could make what He never was, is and will never become? This implies that for Him to do that, He must have, in His Nature, Essence and Substance, the natures, essences and substances of these beings He has made. Thus, God is substantially and essentially a combination of substances and essences of whatever that exists and that is why He could make them and equally manipulate them. By this, God is identified as the Paramount and all-encompassing Essence, Substance and Nature of all essences, substances and natures. The implication of this is that having as His essence and substance, the essences and substances of all existents, he is all those things that are- be it invisible or visible, one or many. So, He is by this Nature, Essence and Substance, 'Change Himself.' The different and contradictory attributes we give to Him have already bore clear witness to this fact.

Anaxagoras (500-428 BC) the son of Hegesibulus of Eubulus of Clazomenae in Asia Minor identifies the Nous/Mind and Matter as the reality. For him, both Nous and Matter are eternal, imperishable and uncreated. Though he did not attribute the creation of matter to Nous, the essential duty of the Mind is to organize the universe and maintain order and then rule everything that exists in it, hence "all things which have life both the greater and the less are ruled by mind." In his submission, he writes

Mind took command of the universal evolution so as to make things revolve at the outset. . . And the things which were mixed, together, and separated off, and divided were all understood by Mind. And whatever they were going to be, and whatever things were then in existence that are not now, and all things that now exist and whatever shall exist all were arranged by Mind (Hyland, 1973:275)

It is still the duty of the Mind or Nous to bring about revolution through which everything gets mixed with everything so that in anything are found the elements of every other thing. Expatriating this idea, he says:

Mind set in order all things that were to be and are now and that will be, and this revolution in which now revolve the stars and the sun and the moon and the air and the aether which are separated off... The revolution itself caused the separating off, and the dense is separated off from the rare, the warm from the cold, the bright from the dark, and the dry from the moist. And there are many portions of many things (Stumpf & Fierse, 2003:24)

This Mind or Nous or even Spirit could in all ramifications be termed God, all-knowing

and all-possible and the Attorney General over all things that are.

However, presupposing the eternity of Matter implies that in everything existing in this universe, there is part of every other thing (but not the *Nous*) existing in universe with it through the separation principle. That is to say that “nothing is altogether separated off from anything else except Mind.” So, in anything that is, there are elements of every other thing that is. “In everything there are particles of every other thing.” Separating the *Nous* out from this inter-content of everything that is, he stated: “Other things all contain a part of everything but mind is infinite and self-ruling and is mixed with nothing, but is alone by itself” (Hyland, 1973:275). But this is possible having posited that Matter is eternal, and so, all other matter and every other existent in the universe begin to exist and be nourished from the original *spermata* or *germs* or *seeds* of the eternal, uncreated and imperishable Matter through the principle of *separation*. Clear facts here include: That the *Nous* is infinite. It also does not contain any other existent, and so, it is self-content and contented. In his word, the Mind/*Nous* “is infinite and self-ruled, mixed with nothing, but is alone, itself by itself.” The *Nous* does not get itself contracted in the revolution through which everything gets content of every other thing that is, even though it is the cause of the revolution. Anaxagoras equally goes ahead to differentiate between the Mind and Matter as eternal phenomena saying that the Mind/*Nous* is “the finest of all things and the purest, and it has all knowledge about everything and the greatest power.” Be that as it may, his inconsistency in articulation poses a problem to his ideology. Here, he wears the Mind an attribute of matter by being the “finest of all things.” However, the point is: If two unlike things are eternal, the Maker must have possessed both natures of the existents if not, He could not have made them, and so distinctly in nature like that.

However, we may arguably say that the Christian idea of 'Unchanging Changer' attribute of God drew a lot of support from the Anaxagorean thought. But that is the exact question! How could the *Nous* cause the revolution yet not contain any element of any other thing involved in the revolution? Other things are able to participate well and with no complain because they are elementarily, essentially, substantially and naturally contents of one another. The *Nous* which we can infer is 'God' could not have done it if it had not in its essence, the essences of those participants. So, how could the *Nous* give out what it does not have or cause what he does neither know nor participate in? Everything being found in every other thing is all existential demonstration of change, and if it (the *Nous*) could cause such a process through which such an action happens, then it must be the original change and a bundle of the essential and substantial contents of all the participants in that very thing or process. From all indications, we can score higher, the pluralists who have posited that reality is a herd or bundle of some sort of elements. They are nearer to the real nature, substance and essence of that which really is; even though Anaxagoras frowns at their position that through the principle of the abound clash of love and hate that the emergence of beings and their continuity and progress take place.

Another contradictory attributive nature of God is God's being everywhere (omnipresence) yet He is the Unmoved Mover. How could He cause movement if movement is not in His nature? If He does not move, then He is stationary, and where

could His stand be? This attribute makes God to appear the weakest, insignificant and smallest of anything that exists. How could He, with and in the attribute still be everywhere? And if He is everywhere, is He equally in the hell, toilet and other dirty places even when we are told that cleanliness is next to Him- as the epitome of purity? How could He be everywhere yet He does not move? Even clearly movable things we know are not simultaneously everywhere every time. This is a quick and smart attempt to deny God's existence in time and space but be that as it may, if God must be identified by this attribute, it must be accepted that His essence, substance and nature are nothing but the practicality of real movement. Some say that He does not need movement because He has neither anything to gain nor to lose by engaging in it. So, it is insignificant to His beingness and adds nothing to it. But the exercise of movement proves His real essence-which is being everywhere. So, if He must be everywhere, He must either participate in the reality of movement or become visible, and as such, the act and reality of movement becomes very significant and essential to His nature, essence and substance. For Anaxagoras, Mind is everywhere, and in his own words, Mind is "there where everything else is, in the surrounding mass." Where is this surrounding mass of everything that exists? If It is everywhere, that implies that wherever It is, there must be matter there, yet, Anaxagoras tells us that the Mind is neither found nor identified with matter. At this, will not It be contracted and contacted with or contaminated by matter? Or is Its own "everywhere" different from the "everywhere" matters are found contaminating, contracting and exchanging their essences, substances and natures?

CONCLUSION

At this juncture, we must know that both *permanence* and *change* explain the essence, nature and substance of reality just as Aristotle holds in his *Hylemorphism*, but on this context, explain better the quiddity of the Christian God. This position explains why God becomes what He is not, or what we can say that in His nature, that He is not. He only needs the substance/essence/nature of whatever He likes to become to surface in Him, and simply acts. Thus, the permanence in Him is that His name remains God, but He changes. This is because, in the form of (pillar) fire, voice, bird (dove), men, script, bread, etc, what could still be said of His substance, nature and essence at that moment? 'In' dove-form, 'in' man-form, etc, His quiddity becomes questionable vis-à-vis changing-nature; and in a situation where we can empirically see Him in the form of bird, voice (heard) and in the person of Jesus Christ as in the case of River Jordan, what do we say of His substance, essence and nature at that point?

Again, this may insightfully be unconnected with the reason the African always conceives everything with God-hood attribution, or religious respect having known that God can appear in all forms and things and manipulate them to achieve His Divine Aim/Purpose. If His nature is not a composition of those of these, it could have needed Him to begin to look for essences, substances and natures of all these before manipulating them. But He could be in these forms because He is substantially and essentially all these and anything that exists. God is therefore as many existents as there are, and by this, He does not only change, He is Change Himself. The implications of this position include that good and evil

are of God. That is why He can visit with vengeance, sickness, suffering, fertility, love, peace, etc.

Another implication is that man lives in his own fate. He strives between good and evil. Man is told that the thought of God for him is of good, but evil keeps triumphing every day. Why? And the answer is here: “We know that we belong to God even though the whole world is under the rule of the Evil One” (1 Jn, 5:19). We must equally recall that man has, together with all that he has, been exposed to the deadly authority of this same Evil One (Job, 1:12) The safety of man is in his hands, whichever side his behaviour attracts most, saves him whether good or bad (Ugwu & Ozoemena, 2019: 79-89).

Thus, for God to be complete and perfect in His beingness, the Christians must accept it as a fact that everything that exists, whether good or bad, is made by God. His perfection and completeness in His Godhood is never so without the involvement of those bad existents. Christians must also accept that God does not only change, but that He is Change Himself. If His substance, essence and nature is not change, He would not know what change is both in body and thought, nor would He exercise it.

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