

The Plan of Salvation and the Religion of Humanity in “Janet’s Repentance”

Tatsuhiko OHNO

1. Introduction: God’s Plan of Salvation

The purpose of this study on the third story in George Eliot’s maiden work *Scenes of Clerical Life* is to examine the narrator’s conscious or unconscious commitment to “The Plan of Salvation,” one of the dominant thoughts underlying the Bible.

The purport of the doctrine is God’s plan for saving His children, or us human beings, through the redemption of His first son Jesus Christ for our happiness not only in the present world but also in the next (See Fig. 1). Our existence in the premortal world is hinted at, for instance, in the prophet Jeremiah’s quotation from the words of God: “Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee” (Jer. 1.5). The prophet Job records that human beings were the spirit children of God in the premortal world: “Whereupon are the foundations thereof [the earth] fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof; / When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy?” (Job 38.6-7; emphasis added). Our being God’s children is proclaimed by the Lord Himself: “I have made” you (Isa. 46.4).

Human beings who had lived with God as His spirit children in the premortal world were born into earth to have physical bodies, and only through this step can our souls have experiences to grow up in the mortal world in preparation for meeting God again in the postmortal world. Our being of dual construction—i.e. made of flesh and spirit—is confirmed by the following verse where the Apostle Paul states that we have the father of our flesh and the father of our spirit: “Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected *us*, and we gave *them* reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto

(1) Jenny Uglow points out that G. Eliot’s three narrators are male: “all three of the *Scenes* which brings us back again to the duplicity of the bluff, sincere figure of the narrator, Eliot’s masculine mask” (*GE* 92). We shall follow her reading in this study as the narrator calls himself “us men” (“Janet’s Repentance” 234).

the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. 12:9; emphasis added). A reference to the dual structure of a human being is made in the Apostle James's testimony that "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also" (Jam. 2:26; emphasis added). Death which separates spirits from bodies is a step for the eternal journey that includes resurrection when spirits will reunite with bodies.

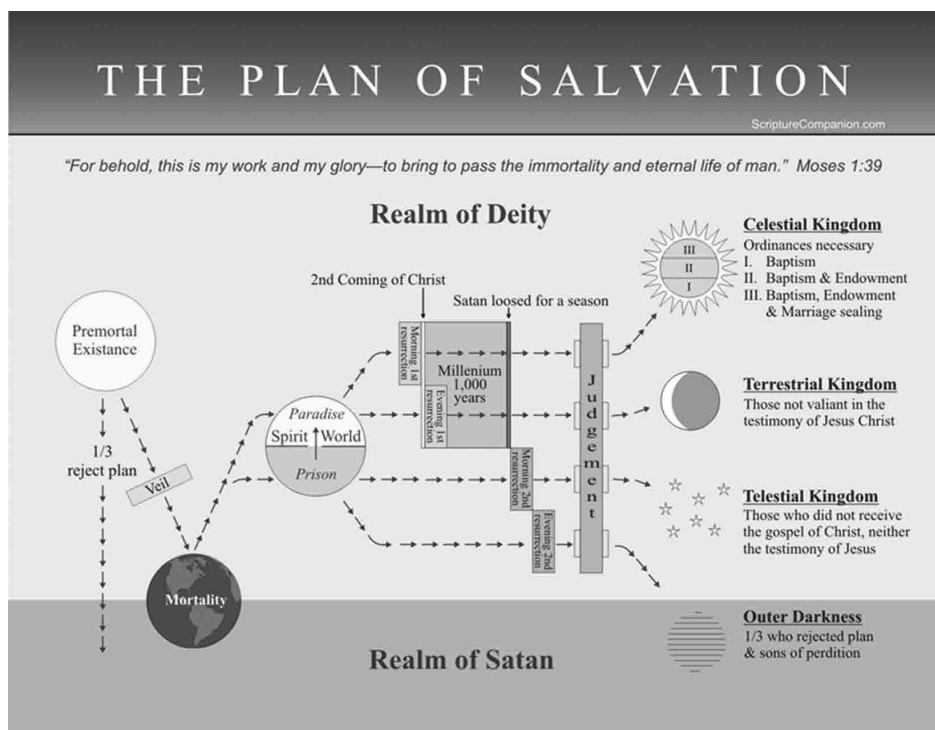


Fig. 1. An Image of the Plan of Salvation (Web)⁽²⁾

The resurrection of all the dead is promised by Jesus: "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his [Christ's] voice, / And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation" (John 5:28-29). It is affirmed by the Apostle Paul: "In a moment . . . the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. . . . So

(2) The view of God's Plan of Salvation varies according to the denominations or the elements to be emphasised. This image is taken from the Internet as it shows the entire flow of the doctrine.

when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15:52-54). Christ's Second Coming and our resurrection are promised by Himself: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also" (John 14:18-19; emphasis added).

We can return to our Heavenly Father only through Jesus Christ His son, whom He sent for us to overcome sin and death, as is testified by the Apostles John and Paul: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (John 3:16) and "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4:12). Stressing the eternity of God's Plan of Salvation, the author of the book of Psalms writes, "The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations" (Ps. 33:11). The plan is made by God according to "the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Eph. 3:11).

There are direct allusions to the divine plan in "Janet's Repentance," i.e. in the scene where Rev Edgar Tryan "aged thirty-three" ("JR" 223) confesses his guilty conscience to Janet the wife of the lawyer Robert Dempster: "a dear friend to whom I opened my mind showed me it was just such as I—the helpless who feel themselves helpless—that God specially invites to come to Him, and offers all the riches of His salvation" ("JR" 299; emphasis added) and "He made it clear to me that the only preparation for coming to Christ and partaking of His salvation, was that very sense of guilt and helplessness which was weighing me down" ("JR" 302; emphasis added). The implication of Tryan's confession is to spotlight the critical function of repentance in leading us to recognize the divine plan for saving us through the redemption of Jesus Christ.

The three key concepts in the doctrine of the Plan of Salvation—human beings as God's children, the dichotomous constitution of a human being, and the eternity of our life—in "Janet's Repentance" shall be investigated in the subsequent Section 2, 3, and 4 respectively to argue G. Eliot's conscious or unconscious affinity with the divine plan. Section 5 discusses her commitment to the Religion of Humanity, a new form of her moral teaching which looks "for divinity not in the supernatural, but within what is most noble in human nature itself" (Jennifer Gribble xii). It is, in other words, "the true religion of

neighbourliness” (Q. D. Leavis 17) which centres on “remedial influences of pure, natural human relations” (*George Eliot Letters* 3: 382; to John Blackwood dated 24 Feb. 1861). Section 6 summaries the above scrutiny and proposes its result that G. Eliot’s Religion of Humanity is another name of the Christian concept of human beings as the children of God.

2. Human Beings as God’s Children

In the Scriptures there is no lack of reference to the concept of “human beings as the children of God.” For instance, the Apostle Paul testifies that “The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God” (Rom. 8.16; emphasis added). He also declares that “we are the offspring of God” (Acts 17.29; emphasis added) and calls Him as the spirit Father of us human beings: “shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?” (Heb. 12.9; emphasis added). The concept is included also in the Apostle John’s testimony: “Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. In this the children of God are manifest” (1 John 3.9-10; emphasis added). In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus calls conciliators “the children of God”: “Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God” (Matt. 5.9; emphasis added). Also He refers to God’s children as noble and upright human beings: “But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matt. 5.44-45; emphasis added). The following statement of God is recorded by the prophet Hosea: in the days of gathering, the people of Israel, or those who believe in God, will be called “the sons of the living God” (Hos. 1.10). The prophet Isaiah records the Lord’s words to every one that is called by His name that “I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him” (Isa. 43.7). Isaiah calls God “our father” (Isa. 63.16; 64.8), and all of us “the work of thy hand” (Isa. 64.8). Furthermore, human beings as God’s children are hinted at in the following verse from Genesis: “God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them” (1.27).

Although the aggressive nature of the “hard, astute, domineering attorney” (“JR” 242) is stressed throughout the storyline, Robert Dempster is also a child of God. The

following quotation clarifies that his good humour comes from the innate goodness of his spirit:

Mr Dempster, on the Thursday morning, was in one of his best humours, and though perhaps some of the good humour might result from the prospect of a lucrative and exciting bit of business in Mr Armstrong's probable lawsuit, the greater part of it was doubtless due to those stirrings of the more kindly, healthy sap of human feeling, by which goodness tries to get the upper hand in us whenever it seems to have the slightest chance. ("JR" 241; emphasis added)

The narrator's meaning here is that goodness abiding in our mind is always ready for coming out on the surface—an allusion to the idea that we have the attribute of God since we are His beloved children.

The same element of the Plan of Salvation is implied in the following narratorial depiction of Dempster as a devoted son to his "very little old" mother: "Dempster, whom you have hitherto seen only as the orator of the Red Lion, and the drunken tyrant of a dreary midnight home, was the first-born darling son of a fair little mother" ("JR" 241) who has never given her "a harsh word" ("JR" 242). To note is the narratorial comment on his garden walk with his mother as it spotlights the inborn goodness of his soul:

It was rather sad, and yet pretty, to see that little group passing out of the shadow into the sunshine, and out of the sunshine into the shadow again: sad, because this tenderness of the son for the mother was hardly more than a nucleus of healthy life in an organ hardening by disease, because the man who was linked in this way with an innocent past, had become callous in worldliness, fevered by sensuality, enslaved by chance impulses; pretty, because it showed how hard it is to kill the deep-down fibrous roots of human love and goodness—how the man from whom we make it our pride to shrink, has yet a close brotherhood with us through some of our most sacred feelings. ("JR" 245; emphasis added)

Dempster, who demonstrates the "tenderness of the son for the mother" as in his innocent childhood, has become "callous in worldliness, fevered by sensuality, enslaved by chance impulses." Notwithstanding, his sense of filial duty denotes the existence of "the deep-down fibrous roots of human love and goodness" within himself which signifies that even such an arrogant person as Dempster "has yet a close brotherhood with us through some of our most sacred feelings." The "most sacred" feeling here means the filial affection which has

been instructed to keep by God through Moses's Ten Commandments: "Honour thy father and thy mother" (Exod. 20.12; Deut. 5.16; Matt. 15.4). This narratorial remark signifies one of the essential concepts of the Plan of Salvation that we are the beloved children of God and therefore inherit His goodness within our spirits.

As we all are, Dempster has not only weak points but also strong ones in his character: Although the "attorney loved money, but he loved power still better" ("JR" 262-63)⁽³⁾, "he had a certain kindness towards those who had employed him when he was only starting in life" ("JR" 263). This narratorial remark is another example of highlighting that he is a child of God.

Mrs Dempster is a child of God as well. She always has "a pretty smile," "something pretty to say to" her neighbour Mrs Pettifer, and "some little good-natured plan in her head" for others ("JR" 221). Although being not "fit to be out," Janet carries a charity basin to Sally Martin, "the deformed girl . . . in consumption" ("JR" 221). She is always supportive of her "brutal drunken husband" (William J. Hyde 61) and, as his faithful wife, practices Jesus's teaching "Judge not . . . condemn not" others (Luke 6.37): "she stands up for everything her husband says and does" and "never will admit to anybody that he's not a good husband" ("JR" 221-22). She sits up with Mrs Pettifer "night after night," who has "the attack of rheumatic fever" ("JR" 222). Tryan perceives that Janet "goes among the poor a good deal" ("JR" 226). She sends the dinner-service and the ham to the "deaf" ("JR" 207) Mrs Crewe, the wife of the old curate Rev Crewe: "We shall get our good Mrs Crewe through her troubles famously. . . . I can do something to comfort Mrs Crewe" ("JR" 236)⁽⁴⁾. Her mother calls her "the child so lovely, so pitiful to others, so good" ("JR" 237). Mamsey, Dempster's mother, complains of her daughter-in-law's neglect of household duties; actually, however, Janet is "always running about doing things for other people"

(3) The Scriptures warns us against richness. For instance, Paul the Apostle proclaims that "the love of money is the root of all evil" (1 Tim 6.10). Jesus says to his disciples, "a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matt. 19.23). King David tells us that "He that loveth silver shall not be satisfied with silver; nor he that loveth abundance with increase: this is also vanity" (Eccles 5.10). The Bible considers the love of power as a temptation. King David remarks, "on the side of their oppressors there was power; but they had no comforter" (Eccles. 4.1). The Apostle Paul discusses that power without love is nothing: "though I have the *gift* of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing" (1 Cor. 13.2).

("JR" 277). Her charity and modesty demonstrate her Christian spirit: "Mrs Dempster had never been like other women; she had always a flighty way with her, carrying parcels of snuff to old Mrs Tooke, and going to drink tea with Mrs Brinley, the carpenter's wife; and then never taking care of her clothes, always wearing the same things week-day or Sunday" ("JR" 279-80). Janet's goodness is praised by Kitty the housemaid ("JR" 309): "There isn't a good-natur'der woman i' the world, that's my belief" ("JR" 310). Even in her convalescence, Janet expresses her wish for ministering: "I feel I must be doing something for some one—not be a mere useless log any longer" ("JR" 320). Janet tells her delirious husband that she will love and forgive him ("JR" 321, 322). According to the narrator, "Janet's was a nature in which hatred and revenge could find no place" ("JR" 325). Janet prays to God for her husband: "O God! . . . is not Thy love greater than mine? Have mercy on him! have mercy on him!" ("JR" 326). Having heard frequently her praised by his patients—"That woman has a tender heart" ("JR" 329)—, Mr Pilgrim, a medical doctor in Milby, comes to feel, "There's a great deal of good in Mrs Dempster—a great deal of good" ("JR" 329). Mr Pilgrim acclaims Janet's effort for abstinence from any stimulants: "I can see she sometimes suffers a good deal of depression for want of them—it shows all the more resolution in her. Those cures are rare; but I've known them happen sometimes with people of strong will" ("JR" 329; emphasis added). The narrator brings to light her self-conquest for others: "The chief strength of her nature lay in her affection, which coloured all the rest of her mind: it gave a personal sisterly tenderness to her acts of benevolence" ("JR" 331).

As seen above, Janet's quality as a child of God is emphasized throughout the story. The narrator implies that her only sin is drinking alcohol: Drinking "something to blunt her feelings" is her only practice which is "so degrading" ("JR" 222). Alcohol is called "that fiery poison" ("JR" 277) and its addiction "sin" ("JR" 305).

The narrator's belief in the biblical concept of human beings as God's children is expressed in his description of Janet's despair:

(4) The "sixty-five" ("JR" 243) year old Mrs Crewe possesses charity, an attribute of God's child, within herself, as she, although being deaf, "would like to shrink up to the size of a mouse, that she might run about and do people good without their noticing her" ("JR" 243). The secret action of charity is one of Jesus's teachings: "Take heed that ye do not your alms before men, to be seen of them: otherwise ye have no reward of your Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 6.1).

Oh, if some ray of hope, of pity, of consolation, would pierce through the horrible gloom, she might believe *then* in a Divine love—in a heavenly Father who cared for His children! But now she had no faith, no trust. (“JR” 287; emphasis added)

If there would be some ray of hope, compassion, and comfort for her, Janet might be able to believe in the “heavenly Father” who loves “His children.” The narrator’s use of the indefinite article in front of “heavenly Father” implies her wonder if there is such a heavenly Father who truly cares for her who has long been suffering from the horrible state of no divine help: “if there was any Divine Pity, she could not feel it; it kept aloof from her, it poured no balm into her wounds, it stretched out no hand to bear up her weak resolve, to fortify her fainting courage” (“JR” 287). Jesus’s strong testimony about the existence of the heavenly Father, however, is found in the Apostle Matthew’s record of His teaching that “call no man your father upon the earth: for one is your Father, which is in heaven” (Matt. 23.9).

Miss Eliza Pratt “the one blue-stocking of Milby” (“JR” 217) suggests that one of the causes of Janet’s unhappiness in her marriage to Dempster is Mrs Raynor’s “foolish pride in having her daughter marry a professional man” (“JR” 221; emphasis added). She continues Janet will never admit that Dempster is not a good husband because of “her pride”: “She married him in opposition to the advice of her best friends, and now she is not willing to admit that she was wrong” (“JR” 222). Janet’s dignity lies in that, although everyone has noticed she looks “more miserable than ever,” she keeps “up the old pretence of being happy and satisfied” (“JR” 279). The womanly pride she upholds in her wretched married life could be a virtue rather than a sin because it fosters her strong will to be a dutiful wife: “she would not admit her wretchedness; she had married him blindly, and she would bear it out to the terrible end, whatever that might be” (“JR” 278).

When Janet visits Tryan’s church for the first time, she is welcomed by the Tryanites. Miss Linnet says to her mother, “do let us go and speak to Mrs Dempster. I’m sure there’s a great change in her mind towards Mr Tryan. I noticed how eagerly she listened to the sermon. . . . We ought to go and give her a welcome among us.” Despite their five-year antagonism with the Dempsters, the proposal is agreed with by Mrs Linnet: “You know she’s been as haughty as anything since I quarrelled with her husband. However, let bygones be bygones: I’ve no grudge again’ the poor thing, more particular as she must ha’ flew in her husband’s face to come an’ hear Mr Tryan. Yes, let us go an’ speak to her”

(“JR” 312; emphasis added). The Tryanites’ willing forgiveness of Janet Dempster is a revelation of one of the critical elements of the divine plan that human beings are the children of God.

Additionally, Tryan’s brotherly demeanour towards others comes from his belief in human beings as God’s children: Mrs Pettifer testifies, “What is so wonderful to me in Mr Tryan is the way he puts himself on a level with one, and talks to one like a brother. I’m never afraid of telling him anything. He never seems to look down on anybody. He knows how to lift up those that are cast down, if ever man did” (“JR” 273; emphasis added). If all human beings are the children of God, we are brothers and sisters.

3. Spirit and Body

There is a debate among theologians as to the equality of the spirit and the soul. The Apostle Paul “emphasizes the distinction between soul and spirit” (“Spirit,” *Unger’s* 1043): “I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ” (1 Thess. 5.23; emphasis added) and “the word of God *is* quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit” (Heb. 4.12; emphasis added). *Unger’s* asserts “When no technical distinctions are set forth, the Bible is *dichotomous*, but otherwise it is *trichotomous*” (“Sprit” 1043). The soul “specifies that in the immaterial part of man which concerns life, action and emotion,” while the spirit is “that part related to worship and divine communion” (“Spirit,” *Unger’s* 1043). According to the article on the website *Bibles for America*, in contrast, we human beings are made of the three parts.

Our body is “the most outward and visible part of our being, and by it we exist and experience the things in the physical realm. . . . Our mind, emotion, and will make up our soul, which is our personality, who we are within. . . . By our spirit we can contact the spiritual realm” and “God is real to us and we can contact Him, receive Him, contain Him, and fellowship with Him” ; “God’s intention in giving us three parts—a spirit, soul, and body—was that we would be vessels to contain Him and express Him. By choosing to live by our spirit, our third part, our soul and even our body will function together to fulfill God’s purpose” (“The Three Parts of Man”).

“In scripture, the term *soul* is often used as a synonym for *spirit*” (“Soul,” *Gospel*

Topics). Some theologians consider the spirit is “the conscious intelligent individual entity that had an existence previous to mortality” (“Spirit,” *Bible Dictionary*), while others the “soul is pre-existent” (“Spirit,” *Unger’s* 1043). Although the “two terms are often used interchangeably, the same functions being ascribed to each,” the “soul is said to be lost . . . but not the spirit” (“Spirit,” *Unger’s* 1043).

G. Eliot’s understanding of the constitution of a human being seems to be dichotomous, i.e. no conscious distinction between spirit and soul. The “spirit,” not the “soul,” is used in the phrase “such fine spirits as Mr Tomlinson” (“JR” 279; emphasis added), a “rich miller” (“JR” 197), whose meaning is simply “persons.” In his talk with Janet, Tryan uses the term “spirit” to imply the Holy Spirit: “as soon as we submit ourselves to His will, as soon as we desire to be united to Him, and made pure and holy, it is as if the walls had fallen down that shut us out from God, and we are fed with His spirit, which gives us new strength” (“JR” 303; emphasis added). In reply to Rev Maynard Gilfil’s comforting words of God’s mercy to his beloved Tina, the narrator describes that her “weary enfeebled spirit seemed to be making its slow way with difficulty through the windings of thought” (“Gilfil” 185; emphasis added). This “spirit” seems interchangeable with “soul.”

There are many references to this dual construction of a human being in “Janet’s Repentance.” For instance, (a) the narrator explains Janet’s pain in her wretched married life by referring to her soul: “poor Janet’s soul was kept like a vexed sea, tossed by a new storm before the old waves have fallen” (“JR” 278; emphasis added). (b) Mrs Raynor the “patient” mother of Janet has “humble resignation enough to sustain her own soul,” but she cannot “give comfort and fortitude to” her daughter (“JR” 287; emphasis added). (c) Tryan’s belief in this biblical concept is hinted at in his confession of guilt for Lucy “a lovely girl of seventeen” (“JR” 301) to whom he had an attachment in his college days with no serious intention to marry her: “I had injured another irreparably in body and soul” (“JR” 299; emphasis added). During his “vacation spent in travelling” after graduation, the lower-class girl goes “away with a gentleman,” and “three years” later poisons herself to death in the clothes of a prostitute (“JR” 301).

(d) In recording Janet’s recovery of hope after her second interview with Tryan, the narrator touches upon her soul: “a delicious hope—the hope of purification and inward peace—had entered into Janet’s soul” (“JR” 307; emphasis added). (e) The view of a human being made of the two-fold elements is also detected in Janet’s testimony to her

mother concerning Tryan's deep faith: "he has felt life more deeply than others, and has a deeper faith. . . . in Mr Tryan it is his very soul that speaks" ("JR" 307; emphasis added). (f) Moreover, the key concept in the divine plan is inserted in the narratorial description of Dempster in his delirium with his wife at his bedside: "His sins had made a hard crust round his soul; her pitting voice could not pierce it" ("JR" 322). (g) The biblical concept is represented in the pity of Janet's "soul" for her dying husband: "she only yearned for one moment in which she might satisfy the deep forgiving pity of her soul by one look of love, one word of tenderness" ("JR" 327; emphasis added). (h) The narrator's description of Janet's efforts to live by referring to her soul is another instance of his belief in the dual making of a human being: "her whole soul had been bent towards the attainment of purity and holiness" ("JR" 335; emphasis added).

(i) Janet's following confession of her temptation to Tryan includes the allusion to the Theory of Humanity and the dual construction of a human being:

The act of confiding in human sympathy, the consciousness that a fellow-being was listening to her with patient pity, prepared her soul for that stronger leap by which faith grasps the idea of the divine sympathy. ("JR" 336; emphasis added)

The narrator's meaning is that "human sympathy" leads our soul to recognize "the divine sympathy" through faith. This citation illustrates the narrator's stress on the significance of the Religion of Humanity and on the scriptural view of the existence of the soul in the body.

The instances above demonstrate the narrator's belief in one of the crucial elements of God's Plan of Salvation that a human being consists of spirit (or soul) and flesh.

4. Eternal Life

G. Eliot's belief in "the eternity of life" is noticed by Chard, who alludes to it by focusing on her novels: "Awareness of the continuity of life, in which the present can never be completely divorced from the past and the future, is expressed in the novels" (110; emphasis added). Chard's assertion can be applied to "Janet's Repentance" as well, and this section examines the story in terms of this scriptural doctrine.

In the scene where Janet articulates her painful misery to her mother, incorporated is Mrs Raynor's piety towards the eternity of life and God's love for His children, the two crucial elements of the Plan of Salvation.

“You are cruel, like the rest; every one is cruel in this world. Nothing but blame—blame—blame; never any pity. God is cruel to have sent me into the world to bear all this misery.”

“Janet, Janet, don’t say so. It is not for us to judge; we must submit; we must be thankful for the gift of life.”

“Thankful for life! Why should I be thankful? God has made me with a heart to feel, and He has sent me nothing but misery. How could I help it? How could I know what would come? Why didn’t you tell me, mother?—why did you let me marry? You knew what brutes men could be; and there’s no help for me—no hope. I can’t kill myself; I’ve tried; but I can’t leave this world and go to another. There may be no pity for me there, as there is none here.”

“Janet, my child, there is pity. Have I ever done anything but love you? And there is pity in God. Hasn’t He put pity into your heart for many a poor sufferer? Where did it come from, if not from Him?” (“JR” 281-82; emphasis added)

Hopeless Janet’s complaints— “God is cruel to have sent me into the world,” “How could I know what would come?,” “I can’t leave this world and go to another,” and “There may be no pity for me there, as there is none here” —signify her belief in the postmortal world where we go after leaving the mortal world.

Mrs Raynor’s confirmation that pity comes from God is closely linked to one of the principal concepts of the Plan of Salvation—Christ’s redemption of us human beings—that God loved his children so much that He sent His only begotten Son to the earth: “God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life” (John 3.16). Her emphasis on the importance of submission to our Heavenly Father—“It is not for us to judge; we must submit; we must be thankful for the gift of life” —is an echo of Paul the Apostle’s words of encouragement such as “There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God *is* faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear *it*” (1 Cor. 10.13), “we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose” (Rom. 8.28), and “we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, hope” (Rom. 5.3-4).

Mrs Raynor is "a patient, brave woman, who bowed with resignation under the burden of remembered sorrow, and bore with meek fortitude the new load that the new days brought with them" ("JR" 235). Janet's view of her faith—"Her mother had sometimes said that troubles were sent to make us better and draw us near to God" ("JR" 286-87)—is another echo of the Apostle Paul's elucidation of the meaning of earthly tribulations quoted above. So is Tryan's advice to Janet: "How can you tell but that the hardest trials you have known have been only the road by which He was leading you to that complete sense of your own sin and helplessness, without which you would never have renounced all other hopes, and trusted in His love alone?" ("JR" 300). Tryan's stress on the significance of "entire submission" to God in his explanation to Janet about the blessings given by having faith in Him shows his abiding faith:

"We cannot foretell the working of the smallest event in our own lot: how can we presume to judge of things that are so much too high for us? There is nothing that becomes us but entire submission, perfect resignation. . . . But as soon as we lay ourselves entirely at His feet, we have enough light given us to guide our own steps." ("JR" 304; emphasis added)

Summarizing the meaning of patience for the author, Chard observes that, for G. Eliot, who is always "tolerant of human frailty and imperfection,"⁽⁵⁾ "the real heroes, of God's making," are those who "know one or two of those deep spiritual truths which are only to be won by long wrestling with their own sins and their own sorrows" (116).

One of the principal Christian doctrines that our mortal life is part of the everlasting journey is spotlighted in Tryan's following advice to Janet:

"See what work there is to be done in life, both in our own souls and for others. Surely it matters little whether we have more or less of this world's comfort in these short years, when God is training us for the eternal enjoyment of His love. Keep that great end of life before you, and your troubles here will seem only the small hardships of a journey." ("JR" 305; emphasis added)

His belief that life in this world is the time when Heavenly Father is training us and that

(5) In her letter to her publisher John Blackwood dated 18 Feb. 1857, 37-year-old G. Eliot writes, "My artistic bent is not at all to the presentation of eminently irreproachable characters, but to the presentation of mixed human beings in such a way as to call forth tolerant judgment, pity, and sympathy" (*GEL* 2: 299).

our earthly afflictions are “only the small hardships of a journey” mirrors the scriptural teaching that our present life is the time for us to prepare to meet God our Father (Russell M. Nelson, “Now Is the Time to Prepare”). Tryan’s advice is linked to the Lord’s warning to us “prepare to meet thy God” (Amos 4.13), since “Someday, we must stand before the great God of Heaven and Earth” (“Now is the Time”).

In the following description of Mrs Raynor’s love for her drunken daughter, there are two elements of the Plan of Salvation, i.e. the hope for the next world and God’s everlasting love:⁽⁶⁾

Mrs Raynor had been reading about the lost sheep, and the joy there is in heaven over the sinner that repenteth. Surely the eternal love she believed in through all the sadness of her lot, would not leave her child to wander farther and farther into the wilderness till there was no turning—the child so lovely, so pitiful to others, so good, till she was goaded into sin by woman’s bitterest sorrows! (“JR” 237; emphasis added)

Jesus’s parable of the lost sheep specifies the greatness of the joy “in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance” (Luke 15.7). Mrs Raynor’s association of her daughter with the lost sheep signifies (a) her hope for the postmortal world and (b) God’s compassion for repentant sinners.

Mrs Raynor’s belief in the next world is indirectly expressed in her answer to her daughter Janet, who wonders if “the best Gospel” should be the one which “makes everybody happy and comfortable”: “I’m afraid there’s no Gospel will do that here below” (“JR” 236; emphasis added). Her reference to the mortal world presupposes the postmortal world.

In the scene where sleeping Dempster opens “his eyes full on Janet” on the verge of his death, the narrator articulates his belief in the next world: “It was almost like meeting him again on the resurrection morning, after the night of the grave” (“JR” 328; emphasis

(6) Mrs Raynor’s love for her daughter Jane is the same in depth as Molly Jenkyns’ love for her son Peter in Elizabeth Gaskell’s *Cranford*:

“My child, I am not blaming you—my heart is bleeding for you” (“JR” 281).

“Perhaps he has been too severe, and perhaps I have not been kind enough; but God knows how we love you, my dear only boy” (*CD*, Oxford 56).

added). The Bible clarifies the resurrection of all human beings in the next life:

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable. / But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. / For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. / For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. (1 Cor. 15.19-22; emphasis added)

Further references to the resurrection are found in such verses as "God should raise the dead" (Acts 26.8) and "God hath both raised up the Lord, and will also raise up us by his own power" (1 Cor. 6.14). The narrator's belief in the postmortal world is also expressed in his remark on the clients' view of the divine justice on their lawyer: "Dempster's well-satisfied clients . . . were of opinion that the punishment of his wickedness might conveniently be deferred to another world" ("JR" 276; emphasis added).

Mr Jerome, "a most sympathetically drawn Dissenter" (Martin J. Svaglic 157), intimates his belief in the next world to Tryan when he makes a proposal of philanthropical aid to the poor: "it's time to leave off moitherin' myself wi' this world so much, an' give more time to thinkin' of another" ("JR" 255; emphasis added). In the good old gentleman's heart, "the fountain of pity" is deep ("JR" 256).

In the final dialogue between dying Tryan and nursing Janet, hinted at is their mutual recognition of meeting in the next world:

"You have a sure trust in God . . . I shall not look for you in vain at the last."

"No . . . no . . . I shall be there. . . . God will not forsake me." ("JR" 348; emphasis added)

Tryan's meaning is his hope that he will surely meet her in the last place where human beings go, i. e. heaven, or the celestial kingdom as in the "glory of the sun" (1 Cor. 15.41). Janet's reply implies her conviction that he will certainly do. Their belief is sealed by "a sacred kiss of promise" ("JR" 348). During his mourning procession, Janet feels the existence of the postmortal world close at her hand: "She could not feel that he was quite gone from her; the unseen world lay so very near her—it held all that had ever stirred the depths of anguish and joy within her" ("JR" 349; emphasis added). The unseen world is a place where they can meet again.

5. The Religion of Humanity

G. Eliot's affinity with so-called the Religion of Humanity—renunciation of “dogmatic tenets” (M. Joan Chard 108) and “deep sympathy with the inmost emotions of humanity” (*GEL* 9: 387) —is one of the critics' abiding concerns. According to Terry Eagleton, “George Eliot was a devout believer in what was then known as the Religion of Humanity. God had been dethroned by an equally exotic, infinitely capacious creature known as Man” (“Eat It.” qtd. in Charles LaPorte 547). Norman Vance observes, “as a novelist she continued to explore connections between divinity (or ‘the Unseen’) and human goodness in an informal, residually numinous ‘Religion of Humanity’ which was influenced but not dominated by the secular positivism first developed by Auguste Comte” (483). LaPorte states that G. Eliot is “sometimes a lonely practitioner of ‘human love as a religion’” (547). Jenny Uglow calls “the development of sympathy” as “a new religion of humanity” (*GE* 91), and as an example of G. Eliot's commitment to the new religion quotes the narratorial remark on “Mr Tyan's rescue of Janet from despair” (*GE* 90): “Blessed influence of one true loving human soul on another!” (“JR” 305). Chard's claim also denotes the author's commitment to the Comtian theory: “As a meliorist, she believed that the human lot would be improved not by divine grace or miraculous intervention, but by the transfiguring action of the heart” (110) and “Divine solace, as Eliot constantly affirms, is only to be known in human form” (116; emphasis added). “Heaven help us! said the old religions—the new one, from its very lack of that faith, will teach us all the more to help one another” (*GEL* 2: 82; emphasis added) is the 33-year-old Marian Evan's declaration of her attachment to the theory.

The narrator's allusion to the Theory of Humanity, or the author's stress on the significance of human sympathy rather than dogmatic theology, is frequently inserted in the text. For instance, Mrs Raynor, Janet's mother, knows “nothing of doctrinal zeal” but is acquainted with “how to bear the cross meekly, and be merciful”:

Mrs Raynor had her faith and her spiritual comforts, though she was not in the least evangelical and knew nothing of doctrinal zeal. . . . I am quite sure she had no well-defined views on justification. Nevertheless, she read her Bible a great deal, and thought she found divine lessons there—how to bear the cross meekly, and be merciful. (“JR” 237)

The narrator's conclusion of his explanation about Mrs Raynor's faith is benignant: "Let us hope that there is a saving ignorance, and that Mrs Raynor was justified without knowing exactly how" ("JR" 237). She may be ignorant of the theological doctrines, but will be justified for her purity in faith and should be saved by God.

The concept that human beings are the children of God can be found in the narrator's illustration of the true heroes when he writes that the "blessed work of helping the world forward . . . does not wait to be done by perfect men" ("JR" 266), and thus emphasizes the imperfection of the Milby hero Rev Tryan:⁽⁸⁾

The real heroes, of God's making, . . . have their natural heritage of love and conscience which they drew in with their mother's milk; they know one or two of those deep spiritual truths which are only to be won by long wrestling with their own sins and their own sorrows; they have earned faith and strength so far as they have done genuine work; but the rest is dry barren theory, blank prejudice, vague hearsay. ("Janet's" 266; emphasis added)

The biblical concept is implied in the first statement that the "real heroes, of God's making" inherit the "natural heritage of love and conscience" from their ancestors, as the phrase "their mother's milk" bears a symbolic meaning of the genealogical line of ancestors who originate from Adam and Eve, the creation of God. The function of human relationship and the criticism of dogmatism are focused on in the second and third statements whose meaning is that, in "helping the world forward," the real heroes experience "long wrestling with their own sins and their own sorrows" to know the "deep spiritual truths," and earn "faith and strength" through great trials and tribulations of

(7) Justification by faith, or "that cardinal doctrine of the Reformation" ("JR" 218), endorses "freedom from punishment for sin, as an act of divine grace, obtained through Christ's crucifixion, and not by man's good works" ("Notes" to *SCL* 368).

(8) Tryan is supported by many Milby people. For instance, Mr Jerome, "a retired corn-factor . . . the most eminent member of the congregation . . . one of the richest men in the parish" ("JR" 207), expresses his respect for the Evangelical curate, "Ah! He's better nor we are, that's it—he's a deal better nor we are" ("JR" 268). For Eliza Pratt, the 22-year-old "silent handsome" ("JR" 217) daughter of the "medical man" ("JR" 208) Richard Pratt, he is "the pastor who had opened to her a new life of piety and self-subjection" ("JR" 272). Mary Linnet, a 30 or so year old "amiable" ("JR" 214) daughter of one of the leading Milby ladies Mrs Linnet, says, "when I see all the faces turned up to him in Paddiford church, I often think how hard it would be for any clergyman who had to come after him; he has made the people love him so" ("JR" 273).

everyday life, not through “dry barren theory.” The narrator concludes this argument by alluding to the value of friendly understanding of our arduous efforts for doing good: “Our subtlest analysis of schools and sects must miss the essential truth, unless it be lit up by the love that sees in all forms of human thought and work, the life and death struggles of separate human beings” (“JR” 267). Hence, the Theory of Humanity has an affinity with the concept of human beings as God’s children since both repose trust in human goodness as their quintessence.

One more instance of the Religion of Humanity is seen in Tryan’s suggestion to Janet to throw away her pride and to ask for her friends’ help:

“Cast away from you the pride that makes us shrink from acknowledging our weakness to our friends. Ask them to help you in guarding yourself from the least approach of the sin you most dread. Deprive yourself as far as possible of the very means and opportunity of committing it. Every effort of that kind made in humility and dependence is a prayer.” (“JR” 305; emphasis added)

G. Eliot’s criticism of dogmatic doctrines is demonstrated in the religious flexibility of Thomas Jerome, “a retired corn-factor” (“JR” 207), and his wife Susan. Although “reared a Churchwoman” (“JR” 246), Mrs Jerome listens to “Dissenting eloquence for thirty years” (“JR” 247) and might re-enter the Establishment (“JR” 247). She has no “keen susceptibility to shades of doctrine” (“JR” 247). Similarly, although having become a Dissenter “very early in life” (“JR” 250) or when he is “fifteen ‘ear old” (“JR” 253), Mr Jerome knows “nothing of” the “theoretic basis for Dissent” (“JR” 250). However, he is willing to offer financial help for the poor folks (“JR” 255-56). G. Eliot’s censure on religious dogmatism is also expressed in Mr Jerome’s “simple, non-polemical” (“JR” 250) dissenterism, or his ongoing quest for righteousness: “Before you come to it, sir,” he says to Rev Tryan, “Milby was a dead an’ dark place; you are the fust man i’ the Church to my knowledge as has brought the word o’ God home to the people; an’ I’ll stan’ by you, sir, I’ll stan’ by you. I’m a Dissenter . . . but show me good i’ the Church, an’ I’m a Churchman too” (“JR” 253). Her Religion of Humanity is incorporated in the narratorial stress on Mr Jerome’s shining goodness which signifies the inborn goodness of his spirit: “Deep was the fountain of pity in the good old man’s heart! . . . he had as kindly a warmth as the morning sunlight, and, like the sunlight, his goodness shone on all that came in his way” (“JR” 256).

The author’s sympathy for the Religion of Humanity whose central idea is thoughtful

kindness towards our neighbours is reflected in the narrator's warning that we should be careful about condemning others: "See to it, friend, before you pronounce a too hasty judgement, that your own moral sensibilities are not of a hooped or clawed character" ("JR" 268). Her Religion of Humanity is also mirrored in Tryan's reply when he declines Mr Jerome's kind offer of a horse: "We cannot judge for one another, you know; we have each our peculiar weaknesses and temptations" ("JR" 271). The value of prudence in judging others implied in these two quotations has a close link to Jesus's teaching: "Judge not" so that we shall not be "judged" (Matt. 7.1-2; Luke 6.37). His meaning is a recommendation to us human beings to be merciful, as our "Father also is merciful" (Luke 6.36). In short, the essence here is that "the true religion of neighbourliness" (Q. D. Leavis 17) lies in the eschewal of hasty judgement and the commitment to mutual mercifulness which we should keep in mind as the children of God. Hence, the instance above shows a close affinity of the Religion of Humanity to the vital concept of the divine plan— "human beings are God's children."

The author's concern with the Religion of Humanity is implied in the narratorial depiction of Rev Tryan's influence on Janet at their first interview:

There is a power in the direct glance of a sincere and loving human soul, which will do more to dissipate prejudice and kindle charity than the most elaborate arguments. The fullest exposition of Mr Tryan's doctrine might not have sufficed to convince Janet that he had not an odious self-complacency in believing himself a peculiar child of God; but one direct, pathetic look of his had dissociated him with that conception for ever. ("JR" 275; emphasis added)

The narrator emphasizes the significance of human empathy by observing that Tryan's "sincere and loving human soul" is more useful to disperse the anti-Tryanist's "prejudice" and to arouse her "charity" than his persuasion based on the complicated religious doctrine. The narrator's belief in the scriptural concept that human beings are the beloved children of God is echoed in his stress on Tryan's humbleness in having no "odious self-complacency in believing himself a peculiar child of God."

The following dialogue between Janet and "her old friend" ("JR" 333) Mrs Pettifer spotlights the Religion of Humanity in the narrator's direct observation that kindness is the religion of Janet and Tryan:

"I like people who are kind; kindness is my religion; and that's the reason I like

you, dear Mrs Pettier, though you *are* a Tryanite.”

“But that’s Mr Tryan’s religion too—at least partly. There’s nobody can give himself up more to doing good amongst the poor; and he thinks of their bodies too, as well as their souls.” (“JR” 274; emphasis added)

The action of the humanitarian religion is to give oneself to “doing good amongst the poor.”

Besides, Mrs Pettifer’s remark that “he thinks of their bodies too, as well as their souls” betokens another principal idea in the Plan of Salvation that a human being is made of soul and body. This idea is clarified in Jesus’s words “fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell” (Matt. 10:28; emphasis added) and also in Paul the Apostle’s teaching that “though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day” (2 Cor. 4:16; emphasis added).

Another example of the Theory of Humanity is detectable in the dialogue between the old blue-stocking Miss Pratt and the old maid Rebecca Linnet. To the former’s criticism of Janet’s weakness in “resorting to a practice of” (“JR” 222) drinking that “A woman should find support in her own strength of mind,” the “Sunday School” teacher (“JR” 265) Rebecca, considering Miss Pratt “still very blind in spiritual things notwithstanding her assumption of enlightenment” (“JR” 222), retorts that Janet “will find poor support if she trusts only to her own strength. She must seek aid elsewhere than in herself” (“JR” 222; emphasis added). Her “elsewhere” means “in human beings or God.” The narrator’s commitment to the Religion of Humanity is hinted at in Miss Pratt’s reply to Tryan when she says, “my humility was rather instinctive than based on a firm ground of doctrinal knowledge, such as you so admirably impart to us” (“JR” 226; emphasis added)⁽⁹⁾.

The narrator’s trust in the Religion of Humanity is expressed in Janet’s wish for “something to rely on” in the quotation below.

She was tired, she was sick of that barren exhortation—Do right, and keep a clear conscience, and God will reward you, and your troubles will be easier to bear. She wanted *strength* to do right—she wanted something to rely on besides her own

(9) As for Miss Pratt’s slightly critical comment on Tryan’s “doctrinal knowledge,” Chard observes, “Although he might be accused of adhering to a narrow doctrinal system and of possessing a limited intellect, he is generous in offering sympathy and service to others” (117; emphasis added).

resolutions; for was not the path behind her all strewn with *broken* resolutions?

How could she trust in new ones? ("JR" 293; emphasis added)

What Janet needs here is not a help from doctrinaire theology but a practical support from Rev Tryan, as "he would perhaps understand her helplessness, her wants" ("JR" 293). Spotlighted is the significance of humanitarian sympathy. The narrator's adherence to the Religion of Humanity as a means of saving Janet is implied in his description of Tryan as "the heaven-sent friend who had come to her like the angel in the prison" ("JR" 347). The same tendency is detected in her increasing dependence on the curate: "the great source of courage, the great help to perseverance, was the sense that she had a friend and teacher in Mr Tryan" ("JR" 332).

Janet succeeds in "the self-conquest" ("JR" 331) thanks to her neighbours' support. The following citation, which focuses on her success in overcoming her trials, includes another sign of the narrator's commitment to the Religion of Humanity:

The goodwill of her neighbours, the helpful sympathy of the friends who shared her religious feelings, the occupations suggested to her by Mr Tryan, concurred, with her strong spontaneous impulses towards works of love and mercy, to fill up her days with quiet social intercourse and charitable exertion. ("JR" 339)

The narratorial attachment to the Religion of Humanity is implied in the following statements as well. Janet enjoys talking with Mr Jerome, who is "characterized . . . by the virtues of his charity and goodwill" (Lynda Muggleston 15), for she "had that genuine delight in human fellowship which gives an interest to all personal details that come warm from truthful lips; and, besides, they had a common interest in good-natured plans for helping their poorer neighbours" ("JR" 340; emphasis added). Janet, her mother, Mrs Pettifer, and a couple of friends bring the Evangelical curate Rev Tryan "the unaccustomed enjoyment of companionship" by his own fireside at Holly Mount ("JR" 346). Janet's eagerness for life is initiated not only by "the Divine love that had rescued her" but also by "the human love that waited for its eternal repose until it had seen her endure to the end" ("JR" 349). What is signified by the latter is Rev Tryan's "true compassion" ("JR" 350).

6. Conclusion

What has been disclosed by the scrutiny of "Janet's Repentance" from the viewpoint

of God's Plan of Salvation can be summarized by the following three points.

First, the narrator's (probably G. Eliot's) fervent belief in the three scriptural concepts — (a) human beings as the children of God, (b) the dual construction of a human being, and (c) the eternity of life—is incorporated into this story of the evangelical curate Rev Edgar Tryan's rescue of the repentant Janet Dempster. In the text, there are two direct references to God's plan of saving human beings through the Atonement of Jesus Christ ("JR" 229, 302). It might be uncertain, however, how deeply the narrator has committed himself on this doctrine; nonetheless, it should be undoubtful that he has known it because his creator G. Eliot was an abiding reader of the Scriptures. According to LaPort, "Eliot absorbed the language of the King James translation so thoroughly as to make it a part of her idiom and manner of thinking" (536). In fact, the letter to her teacher Maria Lewis dated 3 Sept 1841 betokens that 21-year-old Marian Evans is a serious and eager learner of the Bible: "The frequent and indeed constant use of this plan [of studying Scripture] would I am convinced give a clearness and comprehensiveness to our knowledge of Scripture truths that I have not found common, and the lack of which I am earnestly desirous to supply in myself" (*GEL* 1: 106). The significance of this study should lie in the spotlighting of the existence of the Plan of Salvation behind the narratorial belief in its three critical elements.

The second significance of this analysis of "Janet's Repentance" is the discovery of the resemblance between the Christian concept of "human beings as the beloved children of God" and G. Eliot's endorsed idea "The Religion of Humanity." In other words, the latter is another name of the former in that both trust the inborn goodness of the human spirit. Gordon S. Haight, notwithstanding, observes that "The Religion of Humanity appealed strongly to her feelings, but she could never bring her reason to unqualified belief in it" (*GEL* 1: lxii). The reason why she could never do so is explained in Chard's remark that "the bond of sympathy, however deep, lacks the power to overcome human frailty and incompleteness": "humanity's ability to redeem itself" is after all no match for God's (117). Chard's insistence on G. Eliot's steadfast faith in the historical God is shared by Martin J. Svaglic:

[T]he basic inspiration which gave direction to all her works and led her to make of her novels a plea for human solidarity was Christianity. Even though she came to reject historical Christianity long before the appearance of *Scenes of Clerical*

Life in 1857, she maintained to the end the ethical idealism it has taught her in her Anglican home at Griff, at the Evangelical school of Miss Wallington, and at the strongly Calvinistic institution of the Misses Franklin. (146; emphasis added)

The discovery of the resemblance between the two concepts sheds light on the problem raised by Haight and solved by Chard concerning the degree of G. Eliot's sympathy with Auguste Comte's idea from a different angle. That is, what she is critical of is the dogmatic religion, not the Religion of Humanity, because sympathy by human beings is nothing but that by God's children. If Haight's observation is correct, therefore, G. Eliot turns out to have misunderstood the meaning of the Religion of Humanity, since it has a solid link to the scriptural teaching of "human beings as God's beloved children." The Comtian view of religion does not contradict with the essential Christianity since the purport of both thoughts is the same in that they have "the fundamental goodness of the human spirit" as their quintessence.

The third point to note is that Tryan is depicted as likened to Jesus Christ when Janet remembers her short interview with the curate.

His words have implied that he thought his death was near; yet he had a faith which enabled him to labour—enabled him to give comfort to others. . . . She had often heard Mr Tryan laughed at for being fond of great sinners. ("JR" 293; emphasis added)

(a) Tryan's conviction is that his ecclesiastical responsibility is to "give comfort to others." The curate says to Janet that "only one thing that could make life tolerable to" him is "to spend all the rest of it in trying to save others from the ruin" he has brought on Lucy ("JR" 302), and that the reason for entering the Church is "to rescue other weak and falling souls" ("JR" 303). The Apostle Paul testifies that Christ came to earth to give consolation to the afflicted people: "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ" (2 Cor. 1.5). In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus says, "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" (Matt. 5.4). (b) Besides, He is laughed at by people (Mark 5.40), derided by the Pharisees (Luke 16.14), and mocked by the Roman soldiers (Matt. 27.29). (c) In hearing why He eats with sinners, Jesus answers "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Matt. 9.13).

Furthermore, Tryan's Christ-like integrity is emphasized throughout the storyline. (d) He is dutiful. In response to Mr Jerome's entreaty to take more care of himself, "I'm not

a-goin' to dictate to you—but isn't it a'most a-killin' o' yourself, to go on a' that way beyond your strength? We mustn't fling wer lives away," Tryan expresses his strong attachment to his duties: "No, not fling them away lightly, but we are permitted to lay down our lives in a right cause. There are many duties, as you know, Mr Jerome, which stand before taking care of our own lives" ("JR" 270). He continues, "I am doing nothing but what I feel bound to do" ("JR" 271). Rebecca Linnet emphasizes that "Mr Tryan's heart is . . . all given to his work" ("JR" 272). His sense of duty is closely linked to the characters' in the novels of Elizabeth Gaskell, Charlotte Brontë, and Anne Brontë. (e) Tryan is also depicted as a humble person. He explains to Mr Jerome, "if my heart were less rebellious, and if I were less liable to temptation, I should not need that sort of self-denial" ("JR" 271). (f) Tryan's pure Christian faith is expressed in his advice to Janet: "Cast yourself on God, and trust that He will direct you; He will make your duty clear to you, if you wait submissively on Him" ("JR" 319). It is an echo of King Solomon's instruction: "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3.5-6). In short, the evangelical curate practices the Christian teachings of intrinsic value manifested by "that idea of duty, that recognition of something to be lived for beyond the mere satisfaction of self," "a principle of subordination, of self-mastery," and "the theory of fitness for that heaven consisted in purity of heart, in Christ-like compassion, in the subduing of selfish desires" ("JR" 265).

The narrator's concluding remark of the story signifies that the principal characters of his story are Janet Dempster and Edward Tryan:

[A]nother memorial of Edgar Tryan . . . is Janet Dempster, rescued from self-despair, strengthened with divine hopes, and now looking back on years of purity and helpful labour. The man who has left such a memorial behind him, must have been one whose heart beat with true compassion, and whose lips were moved by fervent faith. ("JR" 350)

The focus is placed on Tryan's "true compassion" and "fervent faith" which assist despairing Janet to regain "divine hopes" and the philanthropic power. Handley observes, "Tryan's bequest to Janet is devotion to the life of others. This theme is to be fully orchestrated throughout Eliot's ensuing work" (378). As LaPorte correctly assumes, G. Eliot seems to have an "enthusiasm for Carlyle's idea that a great writer could be 'a prophet for his generation'" (546).

Works Consulted

- Chard, M. Joan. *Victorian Pilgrimage: Sacred-Secular Dualism in the Novels of Charlotte Brontë, Elizabeth Gaskell, and George Eliot*. Peter Lang, 2019.
- Eagleton, Terry. "Eat It." *London Review of Books*, 8 June 2006, pp. 29-30.
- Eliot, George. *Scenes of Clerical Life*. Penguin, 1998.
- . *Selected Essays, Poems and Other Writings*. Edited by A. S. Byatt and Nicholas Warren, Penguin, 1990.
- . "Evangelical Teaching: Dr Cumming." *Selected Essays*, pp. 38-68.
- . "Worldliness and Other-Worldliness: The Poet Young." *Selected Essays*, pp. 164-213.
- Fujita, Seiji. *Joji Eriotto no Shosetsu: Bunseki to Saihyoka* [The Fiction of George Eliot: Analysis and Re-Evaluation]. Hokuseido, 1975.
- Gaskell, Elizabeth. *Cousin Phillis and Other Stories*. Oxford UP, 2010.
- . *Cranford*. Oxford UP, 1998.
- Gribble, Jennifer. "Introduction." *Scenes of Clerical Life*. pp. ix-xxxvi.
- Haight, Gordon S., editor. *The George Eliot Letters*. Yale UP, 1954-78. 9 vols.
- . *George Eliot: A Biography*. Penguin, 1992.
- Handley, Graham. "Scenes of Clerical Life." Rignall, pp. 373-79.
- Hyde, Willam J. "Distinctive Realism: Wife Beating in Three Tales of the Victorian English Peasantry by Richard Jefferies." *Victorian Review*, vol. 25, no. 1, 1999, pp. 50-63.
- Kawamoto, Shizuko. *G. Eriotto: Tasha tono Kizuna wo Motomete* [G. Eliot: Looking for the Bond with Others]. Tokisha, 1980.
- Knoepfmacher, U. C., "The Post-Romantic Imagination: *Adam Bede*, Wordsworth and Milton." *ELH*, vol. 34, no. 4, Dec. 1967, pp. 518-40.
- LaPorte, Charles. "George Eliot." *The Blackwell Companion to the Bible in English Literature*, edited by Rebecca Lemon, Emma Mason, Jonathan Roberts, and Christopher Rowland, Wiley-Blackwell, 2009, pp. 536-50.
- Larsen, Timothy. "The Bible and Belief in Victorian Britain." *Cahiers Victoriens et Édouardiens: Believing in Victorian Times*, no. 76, 2012. Accessed 2 Aug. 2020.
- Leavis, F. R. *The Great Tradition: George Eliot, Henry James, Joseph Conrad*. Penguin, 1980.
- Leavis, Q. D. "Introduction." *Silas Marner*. Penguin, 1967. pp. 7-43.
- Muggleston, Lynda. "'Grammatical Fair Ones': Women, Men, and Attitudes to Language in the Novels of George Eliot." *The Reviews of English Studies*, vol. 46, no. 181, Feb. 1995, pp. 11-25.
- Nelson, Russell M. "Now Is the Time to Prepare." churchofjesuschrist.org. 2005. Accessed 19 Nov. 2020.
- "Now Is the Time to Prepare to Meet Your Maker." orlandssentinel.com. Accessed 19 Nov. 2020.
- Rignall, John, editor. *Oxford Reader's Companion to George Eliot*. Oxford UP, 2001.
- Rosemary, Ashton. *George Eliot: A Life*. Penguin, 1996.
- "Soul." *Gospel Topics*. churchofjesuschrist.org. Accessed 27 Nov. 2020.
- "Spirit." *Bible Dictionary*. churchofjesuschrist.org. Accessed 27 Nov. 2020.
- Svaglic, Martin J. "Religion in the Novels of George Eliot." *The Journal of English and Germanic Philology*, vol. 53, no. 2, April 1954, pp. 145-59.
- The Holy Bible*. Authorized King James Version, The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints,

2013.

“The Three Parts of Man—Spirit, Soul, and Body.” *Bibles for America*. blog.biblesforamerica.org. Accessed 27 Nov. 2020.

Uglow, Jenny. *George Eliot*. Virago, 1996.

Unger, Merrill F. *Unger's Bible Dictionary*. Moody, 1976.

Vance, Norman. “George Eliot and Hardy.” *The Oxford Handbook of English Literature and Theology*, edited by Andrew Hass, David Jasper, and Elisabeth Jay, Oxford UP, 2007, pp. 483-98.

Wachi, Seinosuke. *Joji Eriotto no Shosetsu* [The Novels of George Eliot]. Nan'undo, 1966.

Walder, Denis. *Dickens and Religion*. George Allen & Unwin, 1981.

The Plan of Salvation and the Religion of Humanity in “Janet’s Repentance”

Tatsuhiko OHNO

This study on the third story in George Eliot’s maiden work *Scenes of Clerical Life* (1857) is intended to investigate the narrator’s conscious or unconscious commitment to “The Plan of Salvation,” one of the dominant thoughts underlying the Bible. Its purport is God’s plan for saving His children, or us human beings, through the redemption of His first son Jesus Christ for our happiness not only in the present world but also in the next.

Our analysis of “Janet’s Repentance” from the viewpoint of the three essential concepts for the divine plan—(a) human beings as the children of God, (b) the dual construction of a human being, and (c) the eternity of life—brings to light the following three key points.

First, the narrator’s (probably G. Eliot’s) fervent belief in the three scriptural concepts is incorporated into this story of the evangelical curate Rev Edgar Tryan’s rescue of repentant Janet the wife of the Milby lawyer Robert Dempster.

Second, this research discloses the resemblance between the Christian concept of “human beings as God’s beloved children” and G. Eliot’s endorsed idea “The Religion of Humanity,” i.e. the renunciation of “dogmatic tenets” of Christianity and “deep sympathy with the inmost emotions of humanity.” In other words, the latter is another name of the former in that both trust the inborn goodness of the human spirit. The humanitarian religion does not contradict with the essential Christian concept since the purport of both thoughts is the same in that they have “the fundamental goodness of the human spirit” as their quintessence.

Third, Tryan is drawn as having some analogies with Jesus Christ. His reason for entering the Church is to “give comfort to others” and “rescue other weak and falling souls.” He is laughed at by sinners as Jesus was. He is not a perfect man, but a man of

integrity: he is dutiful, humble, and faithful.

The focus of the story is placed on Tryan's "true compassion" and "fervent faith" which assist despairing Janet to regain "divine hopes" and the philanthropic power. G. Eliot seems to have an "enthusiasm for Carlyle' idea that a great writer could be 'a prophet for his generation,'" and to be a prophet for her generation should be the intent of her writing.