

An Inhuman God for our Inhuman Times: Death in Heidegger's *Being and Time* and Jesus's Agony in the Garden

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Abstract: This paper attempts a careful reading of chapter I of Division Two, particularly section 53, on death in Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1927). Our aim is to deconstruct some of Heidegger's assumptions while imagining the margins of his text that could warrant a comparison and contrast with the biblical theological material of the *New Testament*. In parallel by reading the Synoptic Gospel of Mark on Jesus's agony in the garden prior to his arrest, trial, death, and resurrection, we can initiate a series of comparisons and contrasts. For Heidegger, there is no conception or idea beyond death, and yet death itself as a possibility, even as the greatest possibility to be, is not like any other point in time that a human being can experience, grasp, remember, or anticipate while they are alive. It is not the witnessing of the medically certified death of another person or animal. Out of this paradox, we will argue for a greater philosophical degree of complexity that Jesus the human being experiences when it comes to the possibility of death and the impossibility to surmount it. In the same token we cannot exclude the theological doctrine of the single hypostatic substance (as two natures) of the historically finite person Jesus as human flesh and divine transcendence. So philosophically speaking, his death is unique even though its event as physical expiration on the Cross is like any other human being. However, the physical death of the human called Jesus does not answer the question of the meaning of death in the split-natured unified hypostatic substance of Christ, the Second Person of the Triune Christian God, which includes the First Person of the Father and the Third Person of the Holy Spirit. By tracing a series of complicated philosophical relations, we hope to contribute to the fields of philosophical theology, albeit a heterodox one, and the philosophy of religion while attending to the inherent secular limits that Heidegger's philosophy requires in so far as he imagines his project as 'ontological,' and not 'theological' or 'historical.' We conclude with certain philosophical speculations to what is other to both Heidegger's ontology and mainstream Christian theology.

Keywords: death, Martin Heidegger, New Testament theology, philosophy of religion.

Introduction

We begin by introducing a complex, threefold hypothetical distinction. The objective is to begin to think about the conditions by which we can frame our analysis of death in Heidegger's (1962) *Being and Time* and Jesus's expectation of death in the *New Testament*. In particular we will focus on the *Gospel of Mark* in Chapter 14: 32-42, which depicts the scene in the garden of Gethsemane (Lane

1974, 513). Seeing that arguably the most influential philosophical work in the twentieth century, which itself is a survey of all of Western philosophy since the ancient Greeks up to Hegel and beyond him (Kierkegaard, Nietzsche, and Husserl), and nearly two millennia since the composition of the earliest Gospel by Mark, one cannot proclaim hastily even an intimation of original thought without appearing naïve at best. Laying out the distinctions of the threefold structure will allow us to bracket in a phenomenological sense any immediate senses or intuitions of what the texts offer in terms of ready-made images or perceptions of what we think the texts might be saying. Our thesis is that after nearly a hundred years since the publication of *Being and Time* in 1927 and approaching two millennia since the earliest Gospel of the *New Testament* canon (Lane 1974), there are reciprocal contributions that each text – one of philosophy and the other of theology – can contribute to the other in a manner that exceeds the scope of what either text explicates. If we have to define our field of study, then it would be the speculative philosophy of religion, which is never an object or intention of mainstream Christian faith.

Our intuition is that an imaginary third text forms the horizon by which we can see even more refined, complex, multiple groupings of possibilities for understanding fundamental metaphysical problems of time and death while transcending the limits of human reason and cognition. That is a bold statement, which beckons the lingering question of why. Why is this significant for our historical present? Because our times demand an ever deeper understanding of death and the role religion can play in an age of recurrent pandemics and mass death. Perhaps human history, all of plant and animal evolution in general and the future of the planet's geological survival, is reaching a tipping point. We do not even know if the concept of biological life and death may change in the future. Therefore ethically responsible thought is required to develop a greater philosophical understanding of death and its meaning in the unfolding drama of human experience, and not succumb dogmatically to apocalyptic fanaticisms regarding a doomsday or end-of-the-world scenario. We must rethink the *meaning* of death anew to provide comfort to those who have lost someone, and in our times, that number is legion.

Introducing the Threefold Distinction:

A.) We attempt to lay down the philosophical conditions for the exposition of the question of death in Heidegger's *Being and Time*, particularly Section 53 in chapter I of Division Two¹ (Heidegger 1962, 304) and determine a horizon other than time presented in *Being and Time*.

¹ Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (1962, 304). For reference, we highly encourage the reader to consult three principle articles by Anglo-American philosopher Iain Thomson: "Can I Die: Derrida on Heidegger on Death" (1999, 29-42); "Rethinking Levinas on Heidegger on Death" (2009, 23-43); "Death and Demise in *Being and Time*" in *The Cambridge Companion to*

And

B.) We must articulate the delay and stretch of the possibility of Jesus's death: when he is no longer in the world as lived by any other human being present or past, but through a non-representable hypostatic union that no other human – dead or alive – can access, the possibility of death lingers. There is a trace of the possibility that God will die. Jesus's internal struggle on whether to accept death is a radically unique, incomparable, individuated, non-relational, irreplaceably and singularly certain and true experience that marks the transcending relation between Father and Son during Jesus's agony (Matthew 26:39; Mark 14:32; Luke 22:39, Interlinear Bible, n.d.) in the garden. At first, he refuses out of fear, dread, anxiety, and concern – but not in a human-psychological way – the incoming death event even though he is the One who is without guilt. But then he accepts, willingly, the death sentence. (Contrast that with most, if not all, innocent people who are convicted and sentenced to death today. They may accept the death sentence; but the human instinct to survive, let alone vindicate oneself in the eyes of society, persists, at least in the most horrific cases of miscarriages of justice.)

And

C.) We must contrast A.) and B.) with the actual death of Jesus on the Cross that is witnessed, namely a dead corpse with or without a provable soul. All of this is prior to a non-witnessed resurrection in a sealed tomb, a subsequent flesh-like appearance of some kind to his disciples, and then a supernatural ascendance of that spiritualized body-hood in to heaven in the Gospel's conclusion and henceforth proclaimed articles of faith in mainstream Christianity leading up to and beyond the Pentecost.

We need to lay out all the distinctions and relations Heidegger makes in chapter I of Division Two of *Being and Time*, particularly section 53 (Heidegger 1962, 304), in light of our threefold hypothetical structure of distinctions, and the particular problems it poses for the philosophy and theology of death.² The goal is

Heidegger's Being and Time (2013, 260-290). Thomson's towering achievement is not only his mastery of Heidegger's corpus, but the original way in which he responds to some of Heidegger's main philosophical inheritors in post-World War II France, namely Derrida and Levinas. We bracket the need to engage Thomson's works as he confronts and adds new insights that go beyond Heidegger, Derrida, and Levinas, but this must be deferred to a future work. We dedicate this article to him.

² For this paper, we will focus on the Christian religion but not from any denominational canonical dogmatic standpoint, namely Catholic, Protestant, Orthodox, or Evangelical. We do however acknowledge the giants in systematic theology of the twentieth century, particularly Barth, Tillich, Pannenberg, and Moltmann in the Protestant tradition and Rahner and Von Balthasar in the Catholic tradition. On Heidegger's relationship to religion in life and thought, see Benjamin D. Crowe, *Heidegger's Religious Origins: Destruction and Authenticity* (2006). For Heidegger's separation from theology but how his philosophy can help theology rethink itself on the question of death, see George Pattison, *Heidegger on Death: A Critical Theological Essay* (2016).

to understand being-towards-death, time, and Dasein's possible intertwining relations between those terms without assuming any prior intuition of their significations. For example, Dasein is not a being born in time, which lives in the present, and will die as a mortal at some unknown date in the future according to a linear, chronologically-determined calendar timeframe. Let's face it: most people are thinking of themselves and life in general in that not so extraordinary manner. The abandonment of any recourse to physical, observable, spatialized time is one of the hallmark achievements of *Being and Time* (Heidegger 1962, 374-375).³ It is virtually impossible to attend to the chapter on death without taking all of Division Two into account, including the problem of primordial temporality in section 65 (1962, 370), 'within-time-ness' in sections 78-80 (1962, 456-472) and Heidegger's penultimate confrontation with Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* in section 82 (1962, 480).⁴ We will keep this in mind without losing focus on the thematic of death and the comparison and contrast of Jesus's anticipation of death in the Synoptic Gospel of Mark.

Before moving on to our analysis, let us preface this work with one remark. We do not want to suggest, disingenuously, that buried beneath *Being and Time* lies a philosophical plagiarism committed by Heidegger. That would be to accuse him of an intentional misappropriation of the great theological problem of Jesus's approach to death before his actual death on the Cross and resurrection as the disclosure of the core theological truth of Christian revelation: that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, One Person who is co-Eternal with the Two Persons of the Father and the Holy Spirit who comprise the triune Christian God, died wholly and completely as any human being would except he did so for humanity's sins and was resurrected, ascended to heaven and will come again to judge both living and dead (Nicene Creed, n.d.). All the while and against this foundational proclamation of Christian truth, Heidegger proclaims a radical originality in his ontological articulation of the question of the meaning of Being (1962, 19): a question that has never been recorded in the history of Western philosophy and religion, particularly Christianity. Hence some may claim a prestidigitation occurs because his work is derivative of the true original break that is the *New Testament* precisely when Heidegger perpetrates that the totality of his project has nothing to do with theology or religion (1962, 30).⁵ But proving a Heideggerean heresy by

³ Heidegger calls the linear, objective, physical, spatialized, or subjective time of now-points, whether no longer now (past), now (present), and yet to be now (future), 'ordinary' and 'inauthentic.' (1962, 374) This is from section 65 in Chapter III of Division Two where Heidegger give us his most elaborate view of a more 'primordial' and 'authentic' temporality that can derive the linear, inauthentic conception (1962, 375).

⁴ Also see these moments in the text (Heidegger 1962, 370, 456, 480).

⁵ Heidegger differentiates this task of the existential analytic of Dasein and the framework of fundamental ontology from all and any theologies. He mentions several times that his project is not that of theology; the latter 'science' seeks to describe the relation between human being and God through the phenomenon and logos of representations of the very Being of human beings in relation to transcendence. For Heidegger, this obscures the question of the meaning of Being

attempting to reoccupy the inner-contents of *New Testament* revelation and literally rewrite the text of the Bible to expose *Being and Time* as its false copy is not the goal.⁶ It is tempting, but not the goal.

By laying out both structures – Heidegger’s *Being and Time* and the *New Testament* – in their radical alterity to one another and in relation to another, we can then think about the conditions of the historical present. This means thinking of the radical alterity of both that has yet to be articulated within or between them. What we titled as an ‘Inhuman God for Inhuman Times’ is when mass death in the age of pandemics becomes normalized and accepted. When gratitude for individual survival in the face of mass death becomes the objective, or when fear of death into anonymous mass death persists. Or when everyday life continues to pass on as if either nothing new is happening (there have been mass plagues in human history before) or this is a new modality of being that we accept dogmatically. Individual death disappears within the invisible horizon of mass death, which is no particular death at any moment. An individual death in its truly singular individuality risks anonymity, and therefore not occurring in a personally unique way. There is nothing we can do about our situation, and this is just how things will continue to be as long as we as a species live on this precarious earth. This home that is our planet has been made more vulnerable with our actions and decisions. This is an earth that is being eroded by human-induced climate change. We learn to live not life as the fullest with hope and aspiration to become something someday, but life as contingent, fortuitous, and death as intrinsic to living, not something delayed. Death is not the goal at some endpoint of a progression, but something that happens before it should, somewhere in the middle of a lifespan. That is a contradiction or distortion of our most basic intuitions of living and dying. We become a living death so to speak. History (which is a recording of all past dead things and people) is passing into death itself as it is sucked into a void. We have resigned ourselves, and this is our fate pure and simple.

Yet these ways of reflecting are incomplete and bury other possibilities to think in more philosophical, non-subjective, non-spatialized, speculatively unique ways. We must attempt not to think from within our historical present and from within the domain of human subjectivity. There is something uncanny occurring in our present, and it has nothing to do with the mass cultural, political, social, religious, and media coverage of today’s Covid-19 global pandemic. This is not about what actual human beings are doing or saying about the current waves of death across the world. This seemingly new age of paranoia on mass death may haunt us in the future, but even that can be deconstructed, namely the relation

from the outset. He will set out to do something entirely different (Heidegger 1962, 30, 50, and 74).

⁶ On these matters of Heidegger’s deep indebtedness to Christian theology that he himself often failed to acknowledge, see Laurence Paul Hemming, *Heidegger’s Atheism: The Refusal of a Theological Voice* (2002).

between present and future on the one hand and a new conception of death on the other. Rather than the aforementioned senses of the present, philosophical reflection on death is difficult when one wants to resist all immediate intuitions, experiences, and perceptions of death happening today. And yet some of us, many of us, know people close to us who have been lost. And when they depart, they no longer can communicate to us as one living person to another.

Hence, we must return to Heidegger's *Being and Time* (1962) and the *New Testament* (Lane 1974) to uncover the possibilities of deeper meaning and ways to think what is not being thought today in response to the call for our times. This points to an attestation of what is truly most disturbing about our times. For over a year and half, the globe has been subjected to a daily count of infections, hospitalizations, and deaths, which seems to have no definitive end in society, while all of human interaction in the public space has been transformed. Different countries, which in normal times would never know about the internal affairs of the other, are now brought together in a common sense of empathy and compassion. Perhaps our universal humanity has been reinvigorated. But inversely vaccines are hoarded by the most enriched within a society or the wealthiest nations in the international system of relations, pointing to a peak of self-preservation at all costs. Many have died, and many are dying. In some sense, one might argue that our very human essence may have been altered, even epigenetically at the biological level for future generations.

And yet this question of death has not been carefully constructed, at least in a philosophical way. Because we are living through the torment of this historical present, we cannot run ahead to see how we will have reflected and thought about our past in the future. We are all blinded by the hyper-visibility of death that engulfs us. Yet we may venture a speculative attempt even in these most tormented of times. For as Heidegger noted, indeed, the past does 'historize' out of the impending future (1962, 41), and that has nothing to do with a point moving in linear time, whereby past is 'no longer,' present is 'now,' and the future a 'yet to be now.' (1962, 373) How the future births the past is never a present event transpiring now. Therefore, time is not like any other image or experience we may have as object or idea of the mind to be grasped following the legacy of Kant's critical-transcendental philosophy.

By further excavating the depths of Heidegger's text, we must develop the distinction between common senses of ending, for example cessation, negation, vanishing of all that is, including experience, being, living, imagination (regardless of an existence of a soul or spirit that lives on past the dead body) *and* a more radical notion of completion. But completion is not as an end point in linear time, like completing the last chapter of a book that is finished and now closed. There is no more writing to be done for that book. Completion as an ecstatic relational-event of movement is irreducible to the beginning, middle, and end of a story, for example the life and death of a historical person like Abraham Lincoln, namely his birth, presidency, and death. It does not entail a physical boundary in space and

time, particularly chronological or historical time. In fact, the poles of beginning and end split apart into alterities releasing a different event of motion that is not linear or circular or rectilinear. This is how we will read both *Being and Time* and the *New Testament's* Synoptic Gospel of Mark, which means we have to interweave them into each other too. This question is why does the uncanny and irreducible difference between the two major attempts in the Judeo-Christian West – or the original Hebrew Bible and the Greek New Testament – exist, and what does that mean for the prospects of religion again in the West nearly two centuries after the critique of religion began publicly in the eighteenth-century Enlightenment. Perhaps previous dogmatic conceptions of the Godhead must give way to a new conception, heretofore unheard, unsaid, and unseen. And this would be unthinkable for Heidegger, or at least the Heidegger of the 1920s who conceived and composed *Being and Time*.

Reading the Text of *Being and Time*

Turning to the texts themselves, we must carefully delineate how many different terms associated with death and dying, which Heidegger introduces from the original German as provided in the Macquarrie and Robinson English translation⁷:

Death (Tode)
dying (Sterben)
perishing (Verenden)
demising (Ableben)
no-longer-Being-there (Nicht-mehr-da-sein)
the dead (Toten)
'deceased' (Der 'Verstorbene')
Dead person (Dem 'Gestorben')
Being-at-the-end (Zu-Ende-sein)
Being-come-to-an-end (Zuendegekommensein)
Coming-to-an-end (Zu-Ende-kommen)
end and totality (Ende und Ganzenheit)
being-towards-the-end (Sein zum Ende)
being-towards-death (Seins zum Tode)

⁷ Therefore, we will not provide the original German for all English phrases, only the ones we see appear in the English translation of the text. These are the terms and phrases we saw appear through chapter I of Division Two. It points to the staggering number of terms and their various senses that Heidegger grapples with.

All these possibilities swirl around the question of death, whereby the impossible, or no longer being in the world, is conceived as a possibility, which in turn cannot be intuited, experienced, conceptualized, and recounted precisely as long as Dasein is. What Dasein is can never be present. Dasein has a relation to death, but not like a person who holds an object. Dasein does not possess death because death is not an event or thing. Death for Dasein, in short, is not a concept, thing, or event that is present or with a living person, and furthermore is not the biomedical death of a human body or the continuation of an immaterial soul into an afterlife for certain religions. Heidegger is not concerned with concepts of the afterlife or the state of being 'immortal.' (1962, 291) They all represent spatialized forms of thinking derived from presence. A sustained commentary of all these phrases on death to differentiate it from any scientific, social scientific (anthropological, sociological, political, or economic), metaphysical, or religious definitions of death in this all-important chapter of Division Two of *Being and Time* must be deferred.⁸

Let us restate with Heidegger in emphatic terms: that answering the question of what death is (for Dasein as understood in the existential analytic) does not arise from "biology, psychology, theodicy, or theology." (Heidegger 1962, 292) After making this statement and what follows after sections 46-49 (1962, 279-293), Heidegger produces his own unique interpretations of death and its relation to Dasein, which means care as the Being of Dasein (from Division One); and to look further ahead, the meaning of care (1962, 225) will turn out to be primordial temporality in section 65 (1962, 370) of Chapter III of Division Two. Death to care to temporality forms a horizon for inquiry. But the movement from Heidegger's articulations about death as the 'the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein' (1962, 294) and death as "something that stands before us – something impending" (1962, 294)⁹ to care to temporality is not simple by any means. For that movement, also non-relational, singular, and not to be taken over by another, is what encapsulates all the major points in Division Two. So we must stay here so to speak and be the Dasein of this moment of *Being and Time*, precisely as we imagine the passage into the New Testament text.

Reading the *New Testament's* Synoptic Gospels

Perhaps this could be the point of transition. Rather than continuing with the presentation of what occurs after Heidegger's formulations on page 294 to the end

⁸ We will not have time in this paper to generate that commentary because we have to take what we can from *Being and Time* and spend the major part of the paper on thinking new relations, differences, and interrelations of them in the *New Testament* Gospel account of Jesus's agony on his impending death. We highly recommending starting with Thomson's deft delineation of all the terms in *Being and Time* regarding death. See note 1 above.

⁹ Furthermore, on the same page, Heidegger states: "Thus death reveals itself as that possibility, which is one's ownmost, which is non-relational, and which is not to be outstripped [unüberholbare]. As such, death is something distinctively impending." (1962, 294)

of Chapter I: “DASEIN’S POSSIBILITY OF BEING-A-WHOLE, AND BEING-TOWARDS-DEATH,” we can move on by prefiguring the scene of Jesus’s agony in the garden. Presumably he is alone, the three disciples are asleep, and for a moment let’s assume no passerby or travelers are within hearing distance. Jesus is talking, but apparently to no one until we learn that he is addressing his Father who is not manifest in the world as an object other than Jesus Himself as the Son, the preexistent logos Incarnate.¹⁰ How these short passages on the scene in the garden, namely Mark 14:32-42, Matthew 26:36-46, and Luke 22:39-46, can blow up into larger philosophical treatises to counter line-by-line Heidegger’s discussion about ‘death as the possibility of impossibility’ and ‘freedom towards death’ (1962, 311)¹¹ is the task being foreshadowed here in this section of our analysis.

When we line up the Gospels of Mark, Matthew, and Luke, the scene takes on subtle twists and turns in the narrative presentations. This is to say nothing of the complexity of the original Koine Greek.¹² We can try to compare and contrast certain speculative philosophical dimensions to an essentially faith-filled theological text, without necessarily subscribing to the faith itself, with a running deconstructive commentary on Heidegger’s chapter, particularly on everything that follows page 294 in the English translation: it is there where Heidegger starts to introduce his own iconoclastic and original definitions of death after having differentiated the question from all other registers of death, ordinary conceptions that human beings presuppose as real-life occurrences, i.e. from science to religion. What haunts us is this striking difference-in-relation between what one can interpret out of the *New Testament* and where Heidegger is heading in his fundamental ontology.

In the *New Testament*, Jesus proclaims, first when the disciples were awake and then after they are sleep, all of which is preceded by the Gospel writer’s characterization of Jesus’s state-of-being in this terribly anxious moment: “He began to be greatly awe-struck and deeply distressed And He says to them Very

¹⁰ This is in reference to the prologue of the Gospel of John. Analyzing that Gospel by itself would require a separate work. After Jesus concludes the Last Supper scene with washing the feet of the disciples (which occurs in Matthew and Luke too), we have a series of long discourses to the disciples and then to the Father alone asking for prayers for them, Himself, and the future of humanity. See chapters 13 to 17 in the Gospel of John (Biblios.com, n.d., under *Interlinear Bible*).

¹¹ The culminating paragraph of the whole chapter I of Division Two on death is this: “We may now summarize our characterization of authentic Being-towards-death as we have projected it existentially: anticipation reveals to Dasein its lostness in the they-self, and brings it face to face with the possibility of being itself, primarily unsupported by concerned solicitude, but of being itself, rather, in an impassioned freedom towards death – a freedom which has been released from the illusions of the ‘they’, and which is factual, certain of itself, and anxious.” (Heidegger 1962, 311) For sure, we have to return to this passage time and again as it conceals in its crypt a bizarre analogy to what Jesus was facing in his agony in the garden.

¹² The author has one year of formal *New Testament* Greek study, but other than that can make no claims to being able to leverage the complexity of the original Greek for the purposes of this philosophical exposition.

sorrowful is the soul of Me even to death.” (Mark 14:33-34, Interlinear Bible) And then the Gospel writes again on Jesus in the third person before rendering Jesus’s first person prayer to the Father: “if possible it is might pass from Him the hour And He was saying Abba – Father all things [are] possible to You take away the cup this from me but not what I will but what You.” (Mark 14:35-36, Interlinear Bible)

As Kierkegaard knew one must tread very carefully, slowly, and with great resolve to get into the paradoxes of time, eternity, the finitude of the self and hence tackle dilemmas as only a philosophically-minded writer can do to even attempt an encounter with this moment.¹³ Who would dare try to take Jesus’s place and think within the secret of his own messianic consciousness in the moment of his dread and sorrow, an impossibility for any mere mortal human being? Reading Kierkegaard in relation to Heidegger is a mighty task indeed.¹⁴ But this is not the task at hand, let alone Heidegger’s critique of Kierkegaard¹⁵, and so minimally an acknowledgement of this intellectual historical connection must be made before attempting any claim to philosophical originality.

Returning to the quotations from the *Gospel of Mark*, we can initiate these critical observations keeping in the background a recollection of what is happening in chapter I of Division Two in Heidegger’s *Being and Time* on the possibility of Dasein ‘BEING-A-WHOLE’ and ‘BEING-TOWARDS-DEATH.’ (1962, 279) At least for Heidegger, simply put, Dasein is never present, and as long as it is (in the world), it is incomplete. The only thing to complete Dasein is its greatest possibility to be that is death. But death is never an event in future linear, chronological time that Dasein will ever experience, pass through, and recollect in consciousness or dream from the standpoint of some other side, some outside of life. Death would seem to be content-less since it is not any ‘thing’ present nor any dialectical opposite in how nothingness, non-present, or no-thing could be understood. Yet there is nothing more certain in biological life than the fact of death (until our cells can be manipulated to be immortal). But again, living forever on this earth like some animal species seem to do says nothing about Dasein and its existential analytic on the quest to find the meaning of Being. The whole project is about the transcendence of all things and beings, which includes human beings

¹³ See Søren Kierkegaard, *This Sickness Unto Death* (1980) and *The Concept of Anxiety* (1981).

¹⁴ See Michael Wyschograd, *Kierkegaard and Heidegger: The Ontology of Existence* (1969).

¹⁵ The famous endnote vi in section 45 that opens Division Two: “Dasein and Temporality” is where Heidegger lodges his critique and separation from Kierkegaard by lumping him in with everyone else in the history of Western metaphysical conceptions of time and eternity. Heidegger states: “In the nineteenth century, Søren Kierkegaard explicitly seized upon the problem of existence as an existentiell problem, and thought it through in a penetrating fashion. But the existential problematic was so alien to him that, as regards his ontology, he remained completely dominated by Hegel and by ancient philosophy as Hegel saw it. Thus, there is more to be learned philosophically from his ‘edifying’ writings than from his theoretical ones-with the exception of his treatise on the concept of anxiety. [Here Heidegger is referring to the work generally known in English as *The Concept of Dread*.-Tr.]” (1962, 494)

when they use immanent forms of knowledge such as science or social science to understand life and death. But in the same token the Heideggerean project of fundamental ontology is thoroughly non-religious (and we don't say secular in a simple sense), which is what makes it so strange. Death is calling out from nowhere as to its singular non-relatability in the seemingly infinite uniqueness of its occurrence (as neither dead people in the past and people who will die in the future); it therefore hollows out any simple registers of the meaning of finitude, which is stretched on a much larger horizon that threatens to engulf Dasein's Being, which is always incomplete when it is in the world. Death is birthing, but what that means for Dasein is a like vanishing act, but not quite. It has nothing to do with the origin of physical life on earth. Every attempt to intuit what the completion of Dasein's Being whole means, when its Being is Being-towards-the-end, is not transparent. Even saying completion is not ending but an event of passage smuggles in spatialized thinking. We have a profound philosophical problem of movement.

But, inversely, from all these negative statements, death, whatever it is, has something to do with relation and belonging in a distinctive way: death in relation to Dasein's core of its Being, which is care, and whose ground is the temporalizing of time, is so certain, singular, non-relational, and never to be taken over or surpassed by another. Dasein's Being is a being-towards-the-end, which therefore is rooted in some kind of unique motion-occurrence. As we all know from Heidegger, one can die or sacrifice themselves for the other, but one cannot literally take the place of the death of the other or take the other's death away from them and appropriate it to one's own (1962, 284). (I can push you out of the way when a car is about to hit you, but you will live, and I will die in the process. Therefore I have not taken your death, only initiated mine. I also can't take away your death by making you immortal since presumably only a god can do that.)

In Heidegger's terminology – death is the “the possibility of the absolute impossibility of Dasein,” (1962, 294) whereby impossibility means no longer ‘Being-in-the-world.’ Or, rather, “the possibility of no-longer being-able-to-be-there” (Heidegger 1962, 294) comes into focus. There is a possibility of this impossibility, or the possibility of no longer being in the world, and that does not mean a dead corpse or an afterlife in white clouds heaven. It is not the intermundia of a flat-line, a near death experience, travel into some ethereal, happy realm, and then a return to the living body on the surgical table. What this impossibility (as the possibility of no longer being in the world) means, this death that is ‘impending,’ and something also Dasein comes towards, is part of another threefold structure: as part of Dasein as being-in-the world whose constitution is care, we have: a.) the anticipatory nature of Dasein in general, always ‘ahead-of-itself,’ or ‘existence,’ b.) ‘Being already-in,’ or ‘facticity,’ and c.) ‘Being-alongside,’ or ‘falling.’ (Heidegger 1962, 293). Heidegger goes further and says if these three ‘characteristics’ (Heidegger 1962, 293) constitute Dasein's Being, then death too must be construed in those three terms: “If indeed death belongs in a distinctive

sense to the Being of Dasein, then death (or Being-towards-the-end) must be defined in terms of these characteristics.” (Heidegger 1962, 293)

We are tempted to take speculative flight: that is into distilling out of all these formulations one intricately stretched out event where by the ‘distinctive’ (Heidegger 1962, 293) belonging and relationality of death to Dasein’s Being is strewn out over the three modalities of ‘existence,’ ‘facticity,’ and ‘falling,’ (Heidegger 1962, 293) whereby death now seen as unique motion is a ‘Being-towards-the-end.’ (Heidegger 1962, 293) Ecstatically something is trying to stand out of itself, almost outside itself, splitting itself as the outside to itself (not the distinction of inside and outside); and this is not the future event of physical death or something coming to a stop. It is not ‘perishing,’ (Heidegger 1962, 291) but rather ‘demising’ (Heidegger 1962, 291) in relation to ‘dying,’ (Heidegger 1962, 291) to use Heideggerean terms. How death interpenetrates all three in this unique motion of never being present (unlike a car driving down the street) but always ahead of oneself, thrown back to what one is always in (not necessarily existing now at this second, hour, day, month, year), and then being in relation to others and things in the world but in a way where one’s own most possibility doesn’t just blend in with them. It is the vertigo of a zigzag-like movement with no center or source. Perhaps out of three (‘ahead of, already in, and alongside’) we trace a fourth yet to be named. This is the ultimate question, but we must pause here and repeat the possibility of the transition to the *New Testament* Gospel scene on Jesus’s dread, one can say His Being-towards-the-end.

By now we have enough terms from Heidegger’s discourse in order to plunge back into the *New Testament* Synoptic Gospel scene of Jesus agonizing in the garden. Let us unpack some other relations that are buried in this prodigious event, not just for theologians but speculative philosophers of religion too.¹⁶ In this moment of the garden we have the following interrelations: a.) the hypostatic union of two natures in the Second Person of the Trinitarian God, who is both divine and human, pre-existent eternal Logos and temporally finite and bound to die like all humans; b.) the relation between Jesus the man and himself as the future, anticipated culmination on the Cross in the event of agony; c.) the brief moment where the disciples are awake and then asleep; d.) the description, by the Gospel writer, of Jesus’s state of being (‘greatly awe-struck’ and ‘deeply distressed’) (Interlinear Bible, n.d.) as if he could be witnessed even though no one is around; d) Jesus’s self-testimony but in speech to the disciples – “Very sorrowful is the soul of Me even to death” (Interlinear Bible, n.d.); e.) the Gospel writer’s intriguing relations between a possibility of passing, flying over, going past Jesus and missing him and the arrival of an ‘hour’(Interlinear Bible, n.d.); f.) and then Jesus’s exhortation to the Father about Him achieving the taking away of the ‘cup’(Interlinear Bible, n.d.) so it doesn’t land on Jesus since “all things are possible”

¹⁶ We mentioned the great systematic theologians of the twentieth century before and those they have influenced today. See note 2 above.

(Interlinear Bible, n.d.) for the Father; g.) but then Jesus's submission and acceptance that if it were to occur (the presumable bypassing of the irreversibly impending death) it should be by the will of the Father and not his. All in all, the will of the Father remains a mystery, and not just for Jesus. The 'possibility of impossibility' to borrow Heidegger's phrase is lodged in the mystery of the *Being* of the Father; but it is the *Dasein* of Jesus that must undergo it for it to happen to Jesus, what is impending in a unique way, namely this unique death belonging, relatedly, to this unique one-time occurrence for all time, namely Jesus the historical person. Death is an occurrence for sure, an occurrence of the transcendence of Being, not what precedes a resurrection or afterlife.

Through all of these contortions and movements of relations and interrelations, simply put, Jesus is asking for something but does not want to admit his will be involved, and therefore a call to a transcendental horizon which does not speak back. The full presence of the speech-act is not clear; because it is not as simple as one person speaking to another who is not present or visible, a person rehearsing orally what they will say when they see the person, or something else entirely that is not an internal voice of self or the madness of someone speaking to themselves out loud. Jesus is not any of these things. Splicing possibilities between all these relations derives from a complex ground of movement, and thought is tracing the silhouette of meaning in response to some call. The question is how the totality of this happens in the agonizing scene of the garden in terms of the wholeness of Jesus's Being-towards-the-end so to speak.¹⁷ Between these seven possibilities of relations, which in turn form interrelations, in one gargantuan event, we have much to theorize in a strictly philosophical way. And for that we must turn around to Heidegger but explode his propositions into innumerable other possibilities that he did not articulate.

The Deconstructive Appropriation of Heidegger's *Being and Time* to Expand the Interrelations of Jesus's Agony and Being-Towards-Death

To speculate, as only philosophy can do, what might be occurring in the passages of Jesus's agony in the garden, we return to Heidegger's text but try to articulate a text underneath his text. The source of this other text is unknown. The text has purpose – to trace the meaning of 'to die.' Unfortunately, we will have to quote a long passage from Heidegger as we try to read every moment of it with the utmost attunement to what is most uncanny about the entire passage. On death as possibility, Heidegger states:

¹⁷ In a follow-up to this paper, we can look into the subtle distinctions between the rendition in the Gospel of Mark with that of the Gospels of Matthew and Luke that draw from the earlier Mark. But since this is not a work in biblical studies or biblical theology, we will not go forward now. For more on the Gospel of Mark and its relation to the other Synoptic Gospels, see William L. Lane, *The New International Commentary on the New Testament: The Gospel of Mark* (1974).

This ownmost possibility, however, non-relational and not to be outstripped, is not one which Dasein procures for itself subsequently and occasionally in the course of its Being. On the contrary, if Dasein exists, it has already been thrown into this possibility. Dasein does not, proximally and for the most part, have any explicit or even any theoretical knowledge of the fact that it has been delivered over to its death, and that death thus belongs to Being-in-the-world. Thrownness into death reveals itself to Dasein in a more primordial and impressive manner in that state-of-mind which we have called 'anxiety.' viii. Anxiety in the face of death is anxiety 'in the face of' that potentiality-for-Being which is one's ownmost, nonrelational, and not to be outstripped. That in the face of which one has anxiety is Being-in-the-world itself. That about which one has this anxiety is simply Dasein's potentiality-for-Being. Anxiety in the face of death must not be confused with fear in the face of one's demise. This anxiety is not an accidental or random mood of 'weakness' in some individual; but, as a basic state-of-mind of Dasein, it amounts to the disclosedness of the fact that Dasein exists as thrown Being towards its end. Thus the existential conception of 'dying' is made clear as thrown Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, which is non-relational and not to be outstripped. Precision is gained by distinguishing this from pure disappearance, and also from merely perishing, and finally from the 'Experiencing' of a demise. (Heidegger 1962, 295)¹⁸

Taking into account the seven-fold delineations we made in parsing the narrative text from the *Gospel of Mark* on Jesus's agony in the garden, we will attempt to deconstruct Heidegger's text but not for the sake of interpretation. We are also not attempting to explain the depths of Heidegger's chapter on death and how it fits within *Being and Time* and his entire corpus, from the early to later periods.¹⁹ Rather, it is an act or event of appropriation: that is to take the remains from what is partially unsaid in Heidegger and transfer it into a re-patching – in speculative philosophical terms – what may be happening in the totality of Jesus's moment of facing death. Therefore, it is an act that would be inadmissible for Heidegger, perhaps heresy to the ontological divide between his existential analytic of Dasein on the one hand and philosophically-driven theology on the other. This is not about the relation between philosophy and theology, and how that may or may not be drenched in all of Heidegger's works.²⁰ This analysis will then conclude our preliminary investigation, which requires further extension in the future.

For Heidegger, death now takes on some new senses that are rather counter-intuitive and strange to say the least, certainly nothing like biological death. It borders not on the mystical but rather the mythic, like deification of an idea or concept that you might find in Greek antiquity, perhaps Hades. God of the underground is like a god called death. But this is not what Heidegger intends.

¹⁸ See endnote viii. after 'anxiety' in the passage links paragraph 251 with paragraph 184, which precedes section 40: "The Basic State-of-mind of Anxiety as a Distinctive Way in which Dasein is disclosed" in Chapter VI: "CARE AS THE BEING OF DASEIN" of Division One (Heidegger 1962, 228).

¹⁹ See the aforementioned works of Iain Thomson.

²⁰ See notes 2 and 6 above.

Death is not just the “ownmost, non-relational, not to be outstripped” (Heidegger 1962, 295) possibility of impossibility of Dasein (and hence, the possibility of no longer existing in the world). Rather, Dasein is “already been thrown” (Heidegger 1962, 295) into this possibility and therefore we have the facticity that death is also in the world with Dasein as long as it exists. Death (non-present event and never within linear time) *is* in the world along with Dasein as strange as that sounds. This would seem logically that once Dasein leaves the world, then so does its death, which means death is like life but instead of life coming to death, death passes on to something else. Or death is always just attached to Dasein wherever Dasein goes, even out of this world. Death flies out of the world. Yet this points to an absurdity because all we are saying tautologically is that something is leaving from itself; if Dasein’s basic-state is being-in-the-world, then being-in-the-world leaves from being-in-the-world in the passage from death as a possibility to something one can call for now unnamable X. And we have yet to return to the fact that Dasein’s Being is also Being-towards-death and hence related to movement, which is not linear and circular or spatialized. In going ahead of itself as the always, already thrown in where it already is (and while in the world alongside others who are there too) there remains a mystery of a stretching event; and yet the greatest possibility for this Being called Dasein to be is the possibility of its impossibility to be in the world. Dasein’s death is like the surfer and surf as one rising together but to no-where, let alone the decline and dissipation of the wave at the shore. Things are about to become even more strange as we keep reading Heidegger’s passage before plunging back into the Gospel scene.

Being thrown into this distinctive possibility of a movement-event of that which is impending and which Dasein faces, namely death, again is not a point in time that is present. This is where Heidegger makes his next move; he wants to abandon any ‘theoretical knowledge’ (1962, 295) so we don’t drown in the empirical realm of human knowledge, namely natural science, social science, the humanities, and theology and what they say about actual human beings experiencing or imagining what death is, say in literary fiction. This goes to say that we need another entity than what we find in human beings as just human beings (one species among many animal species on earth) to compare and contrast with Dasein. And this is the passage-transition to the Gospel scene. This is where Heidegger’s statements on anxiety and Jesus’s dread seem to submerge in a strange field of resemblances that do not occupy the same space and time. They are not cocooned within either philosophy or religion.

Both Dasein and Jesus are being handed over to death but how and why that occurs happens for totally different reasons. Before going deeper in to Heidegger’s passage on anxiety with Jesus’s agonizing scene encountering death as the horizon for interpretation, let us restate a basic idea about how phenomenology is used in Heidegger’s explication of anxiety. Any time you expound phenomenologically what the constitution of an entity is, you are attempting to describe its event of disclosure, what is in its Being in order to be any-thing, not just what appears or

reveals itself after the event of disclosure.²¹ One can say in a doubling that may seem problematic that it is the phenomenon of the possibility of the phenomenon to be a phenomenon. So no-thing, no presence will actually manifest. This is crucially important when considering Dasein's Being so that one avoids jumping to any simplistic definitions of what that Being is, particularly in banal, every day, human terms. Attaching a simple predicate to the verb 'to be' will not help. For Heidegger, anxiety is that which allows Dasein to be "brought before itself" (1962, 228), like an indicted person or a witness summoned to a criminal trial. This occurs through Dasein's 'own Being' (Heidegger 1962, 228) like a judicial apparatus that includes everything (society, court, jury selection, assignment of prosecution and defense teams, the entire juridical system of law and procedure). But then this metaphor to a real-life example dissolves. Heidegger is deeply concerned with how anxiety as content-less receptacle enables the disclosure of an entity – Dasein – through the latter's 'own Being.' (1962, 228) All of this is prior to the question of how anxiety relates to Dasein facing death to which we now turn. And then we need to finish with a deep dive into all the intricate possibilities for describing relations, differences, and interrelations of relations and differences buried in the Gospel passage.

For Heidegger, Dasein has "already been thrown" (1962, 295) into the possibility of impossibility called death, death as possibility is already in the world, with its own unique temporalization (neither a past nor future event) or death "belongs to Being-in-the-world" (1962, 295) and one cannot have 'theoretical knowledge' (1962, 295) or what all this points to as an idea or representation, let alone what it means. There is no predicate to what death is, the very Being of death. Already there is a question of being temporalizing as 'already,' hence past but not a past date or chronology in history. This complex event of being thrown or hurled into possibility is a stretched event, possibility not as the dialectical opposite of impossibility, but the almost phenomenal apparition that impossibility can actually be something, and death has the ability to belong to being in the world. Death hangs around the world like a stranger in town who no one knows, not as the passage from the world to another, neither realm. Death is not a cut in time or something beyond it. Taken as a totality, this is completely prior to any simple intuition; but also it represents the transcending supersession of human theoretical representation, and hence the failure of all human-created science, including philosophy, to come to grips with the question of what all this means at the end of the day. And yet anxiety remains.

What lingers in Heidegger's passage is where things really take a turn for the strange and uncanny. Heidegger flat out states that Dasein is "delivered over to its death," (1962, 295) but not like a citizen of a state or a war criminal from

²¹ Or to use Heidegger's language: "How is it that in anxiety Dasein gets brought before itself through its own Being, so that we can define phenomenologically the character of the entity disclosed in anxiety, and define it as such in its Being, or make adequate preparations for doing so?" (1962, 228)

another state sentenced to death or given a death penalty for others to witness. Instead, we must focus on this 'thrownness into death' (Heidegger 1962, 295) as a revelation. The thrownness, the act of being stretched out, is linked to a revelatory event in what is revealed to Dasein as its 'thrownness into death' (Heidegger 1962, 295) occurs in a certain mode of revelation. The way and modality of revelation by which this 'thrownness into death' (Heidegger 1962, 295) is revealed to Dasein is linked with something even more 'primordial.' (Heidegger 1962, 295) The primordial nature of the revelation happens in the 'state-of-mind' (1962, 295) that Heidegger names as 'anxiety.' (1962, 295)

If we think about all the linkages, or rather groundings, of terms in one another- 'thrownness into death,' (1962, 295) how this occurs in a more 'primordial' (1962, 295) fashion, and where Heidegger will ultimately go in his novel attempt at rethinking 'anxiety' (1962, 295) as the basis of ultimately what Dasein will experience about itself, about its Being, then the project becomes even more astounding. In facing death through anxiety means that there is anxiety towards something, and interestingly enough, it is not death! The anxiety is not about fear of death or inversely passivity, aloofness, detachment, and indifference to death and dying; rather, the anxiety tends towards the transcendence of the possibility called death into 'Dasein's potentiality-for-Being.' (Heidegger 1962, 295) Death is being englobed by something much bigger. This is where Heidegger gets to make all of his distinctions in the existential analytic with all the ordinary understandings of death as 'experiencing of demise,' (1962, 295) 'pure disappearance,' (1962, 295) and 'perishing.' (1962, 295) What Heidegger is about to elaborate for the rest of the chapter on death before moving on to the rest of Division Two is the instantiation of fundamental ontological difference between a.) the primordial question of Dasein's 'potentiality-for-Being' (1962, 295) whole for which anxiety in facing death moves towards and b.) all ordinary registers that are assigned to anxiety about an actual impending death (say a terminal cancer patient), which could include 'fear,' (1962, 295) or something 'accidental' (1962, 295) like "a random mood of 'weakness' in an individual." (1962, 295)

We have something far more transcendent than these ordinary registers. Before we pause on Heidegger, we can summarize in his own words what the ontological focus of inquiry into anxiety has to remain steadfast in: anxiety "as a basic state-of-mind of Dasein, it amounts to the disclosedness of the fact that Dasein exists as thrown Being towards its end. Thus the existential conception of 'dying' is made clear as thrown Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, which is non-relational and not to be outstripped." (1962, 295) Anxiety as a primordial state of mind culminates as a type of revelation or 'disclosedness,' (Heidegger 1962, 295) and what is disclosed is the pure fact of 'Being thrown to its end' (Heidegger 1962, 295) and the "existential conception of 'dying'" (Heidegger 1962, 295) is not a physical cessation (say withdrawal of life support systems to initiate someone's physical death). 'Being thrown to its end' (Heidegger 1962, 295) and 'dying' (Heidegger 1962, 295) has everything to do with "thrown

Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, which is non-relational and not to be outstripped.” (Heidegger 1962, 295)

These careful dissections and repetitions of Heidegger’s text are, unfortunately, necessary. For we are doing everything in our power to resist calling Heidegger the greatest thief in the history of modern philosophy because of what we see as an uncanny resemblance to the Christian theological text of Jesus’s agony regarding his impending death. As we move into the biblical text, we now have in the background, through Heidegger’s own words and phrases about his strange entity – Dasein –, the basis for comparison and contrast with the God-man Jesus. Both of these figures, one from nearly a hundred years ago, and the other from nearly two thousand years ago, one of ontology and the other of theology, can both make claims to something so radically unique that no other human being has experienced. One asks the question of the meaning of Being, and the other is presented as the answer. Heidegger is not talking about human psychology in terms of Dasein being whole Being in non-relation, non-substitutable, not-comparable terms with anything or anyone, including Jesus. And now as we turn to different distinctions not made in Heidegger’s philosophical work, the Jesus of the biblical text makes an appearance. Jesus’s relation to His whole Being with regard to issues of time, possibility, anxiety and death always requires a necessary relation with the Being of the Father. We now quote again the biblical passage in the *Gospel of Mark*:

He began to be greatly awe-struck and deeply distressed And He says to them Very sorrowful is the soul of Me even to death.” (Mark 14:33-34, Interlinear Bible, n.d.)

if possible it is might pass from Him the hour And He was saying Abba – Father all things [are] possible to You take away the cup this from me but not what I will but what You.” (Mark 14:35-36, Interlinear Bible, n.d.)

This is where the departure from Heidegger’s text has to take place based on our phenomenological exposition grounded in a speculative philosophical flight.

Jesus’s state of agony, and one could say ‘anxiety,’ is that of his ‘soul’ (Interlinear Bible, n.d.) burrowing into a realm of being ‘Very sorrowful’ (Interlinear Bible, n.d.) as his whole Being moves toward death. There would be enough to unpack in terms of the mystery of the hypostatic union of the two natures – divine and human – experiencing what appears to be the human dimension of suffering, sadness, fear, thereby warranting the Heideggerean ontological dismissal of ordinary human reactions to death. But the matter does not end there because the hypostatic union does not accede to speaking about ‘human part’ and not the divine part, which can only be spoken about at the same time; for the two cannot be separated or mixed, and one cannot change or divide the other (The Chalcedonian Creed, n.d.). Trying to create a fantastical mathematical logic out of ‘2=1’ is not the point either. There could be two movements within one entity, but we must foreclose that thought. However, the

issue is not using Christian theological doctrine to trump Heidegger's characterization of Dasein's relation to death; or, inversely, to save Christian proclamation from Heidegger's banishing of theology as part of the human realm and the history of metaphysics that his unique project seeks to destroy (Heidegger 1962, 30, 54, 74).

We stated from the beginning that our project is neither one of defending the faith nor religion in general nor accusing Heidegger of heretical thievery, or his aping of this basic scene in the garden and others in the *New Testament* regarding Jesus's unsurpassable relation to death before the events of the Cross and Resurrection. Rather, the real question is this: how is it in the core of Jesus's Being an alternative split with a new possibility beyond the possibility of impossibility, namely death, which hatches out of the progression and movement that will ultimately be human death? Death hangs over an incoming death, and this is not circular. This is internal to his own Being before we get to the transcendent relation with the Father on this possibility of Jesus having to face death. What we have to develop further in terms of philosophical speculation, even imagination, is a new fundamental ontological inquiry about not only the Jesus-Father relation in being-towards death but how new possibilities of death as the possibility of the 'hour' (a death-time linkage) that could 'pass from him,' how this transpiration or temporality occurs as death going around the living Jesus and the Father taking the 'cup' of death (which for Christian faith is salvation for humanity in Jesus taking all of its sins into accepting his death sentence) away from Jesus. None of this happens within linear time; the hour happening and the substance of the happening are not tantamount to the measurable span that transpires in clock time. All of this is according to the Father's will, and not Jesus in this greatest of human moments, namely the confrontation with the finality of a painful death. It all points to mountainous event of moving relations and interrelations in a complex notion of being-towards-death. In the world is not only human beings and Dasein, but also the Being of Jesus who faces death. But now in this instance, Jesus becomes a speculative object, not the deity who is adored and worshipped in Christian faith.

Recall what we get from Heidegger is 'anxiety' (1962, 295) as

a basic state-of-mind of Dasein, it amounts to the disclosedness of the fact that Dasein exists as thrown Being towards its end. Thus the existential conception of 'dying' is made clear as thrown Being towards its ownmost potentiality-for-Being, which is non-relational and not to be outstripped. (1962, 295)

Rather than fear as evasion from death on the one hand or the heroic martyr or soldier who dies for a cause on the other, Dasein has anxiety as a disclosure-event of the possibility for being whole, and this cannot be related to in any other manner than Dasein's own being-towards-death, and it cannot be 'outstripped' (Heidegger 1962, 295) or taken away or stripped away by another. That is what we have so far. And perhaps the story ends there for Heidegger on the matter, which tells us nothing about whether he feels philosophy should go no further

than what traditional metaphysics or religious theologies postulate, for example the afterlife of a soul after a body dies. But that is not the point here. Rather, we want to branch out from Heidegger's 'potentiality-for-Being' (1962, 295) and draw out a distinction between Dasein's Being and Jesus's Being, whereby the latter has a series of more complicated possibilities and relations, and therefore interrelations of relations and differences, in a colossal speculative Event; that *there is* beyond Dasein's ontological distinction from all the human registers (science, psychology, doctrinal institutional religion, anthropology, sociology and the entire history of philosophy before Heidegger's *Being and Time*) on the brutal fact of life, namely that at some point all living things have to die.

The preliminary sketch of this non-onto-theological distinction as distinct from Heidegger's ontological distinction with theology is a speculative parousiological difference; that is there is something more to say after the Gospels's accounts conclude and after St. Paul and other disciples reflect in their epistles on the meaning of Christian truth revealed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. In short, there is something other to Christianity, and in that other to its most central character, namely the life of Jesus, and the most important event in that life, namely his taking on death as the transcendence and salvation of all human beings living and dead.

There is something coming, adventing, impending as the bridge between *Being and Time* and another text. That will require moving out from all the distinctions in chapter I of Division Two on death that Heidegger demarcates into these new split possibilities that apply as much to Jesus leading up to his actual death as they do to Dasein. But we have to add to them the question of the *priority* of the possibility of death flying over Jesus, the ground of Jesus's agony and sorrow unto death, and the Father – for whom “all things are possible” (Interlinear Bible, n.d.) – to take the death away from Jesus; all of this is before Jesus's and the Father's vindication that in fact he would go on to conquer death in His resurrection from the tomb. And for those in humanity who wish to believe in this event, they too will be raised from the dead. But we are not concerned at this juncture with either the event of death on the cross or the resurrection (let alone appearance and ascendance) in the tomb. The possibilities of death flying away and around the possibility of the impending death to come and being taken away prior to an actual human death in the world and a proclaimed miraculous resurrection points to the double-ness of death itself. As a possibility it carries a split or schism as to what the meaning of whole Being is if death is that passage, which can complete it as the presentation of Being to Being, and that has nothing to do with ending, coming to a close, or achieving closure. It is not the picture or symbol of a man dying on a cross or is already dead on the cross. But it does point to a titanic event. The event is the passage and completion to reveal the very meaning of the being of death, which will then reveal the mystery of time itself:

that is cavalry and the throne.²² These are newer possibilities that can be grafted back into *Being and Time*'s text but as an outgrowth of an act of appropriation: that is taking the *New Testament*'s passage and blowing it up into a speculative philosophy. In other words, *Being and Time* and the *New Testament* can be entwined in a double movement where in radically different ways both can appropriate and expropriate the other. We can only conclude what that is in outline as we move to our conclusion.

Conclusion

The paper tries to offer reflections on death given the times we are facing in this age of pandemics. By introducing certain key definitions and propositions from Heidegger's *Being and Time*, particularly the key chapter I of Division Two on death, we do not make claims of new interpretation or scholarship that has not already been considered in previous works on death in Heidegger's *Being and Time* and his corpus in general.²³ Rather, the intention is to make sure that fine dissections and distinctions can be first teased out of Heidegger's text. This is to set up the possibility of framing a speculative expansion of Jesus's encounter in agony prior to his acceptance of the death sentence. Buried in those brief moments in the Synoptic Gospels, which is just a few lines in a single chapter of each Gospel, for us, is everything. It means that anxiety that discloses what Dasein experiences when facing death is not fear or evasion or apathy or heroism, but a grasping of the potentiality to be whole Being in such a radically singular and unique way, long before an actual human death occurs to Dasein. But now with a turn to the Gospel passage, out of it and beyond it and therefore not in defense of faith, but something entirely other just as Heidegger claims for himself as being absolutely ontologically irreducible to religion, and in this case Christianity, we too can say that the split of the possibility of death into two has a necessary structure; that it has the capacity to link to time – 'the hour' – which in its nature harbors the mystery of a movement that can go over, hang over, slide by, go around and be

²² This is a brief homage to the terms used at the very last sentence of the last section in Hegel's *Phenomenology of Spirit* or 'Absolute Knowing' prior to Hegel ending with a Schiller quote. Hegel's last sentence of this great work is this: "the two together, comprehended History, form alike the inwardizing and the Calvary of absolute Spirit, the actuality, truth, and certainty of his throne, without which he would be lifeless and alone." See G.W.F Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1977, 493).

²³ Some could say that Derrida's later lectures on *The Death Penalty* (1999-2000) in examining the deaths of Socrates and Jesus, and also commandments against killing in the Torah but also Jewish circumscriptions of when a death sentence can be executed if the Law is violated, marks a type of innovation that presupposes all of Heidegger's ontological critiques of ordinary understandings of death. Death is everywhere in Derrida's corpus as is Heidegger's *Being and Time*, which are always hovering in the background; but his most sustained meditation on death in Heidegger's *Being and Time* is *Aporias* (1993). See Jacques Derrida, *Death Penalty*, Vol. 1 (2014) and *Aporias* (1993). For original scholarship on both philosophers and their relation on death, see the aforementioned articles by Thomson.

taken up by a complex, seemingly contradictory relation of horizon and ground in the very Being of God. The project therefore, after *Being and Time*, must be the explication of the reasons why we must ground the question of the meaning of the Being of God's Time, and the meaning of the question. If *Being and Time* cannot deliver the ultimate question of the meaning of authentic human life and death, which is so visible and ubiquitous in our time of mass biological destitution, and if one cannot remain within the dogmatic confines of doctrinal Christian faith and proclamation of the resurrection, then one has no other choice but to invent a new philosophical account of the question. This is what we will set out to do.

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