

Monism, Dualism, and the Metaphysical Conversation in Genesis

The Genesis creation accounts are not simply theological myths or tribal origin stories. They are, more profoundly, early articulations of a fundamental metaphysical tension—a tension between the useless certainty of monism and the uncertain pragmatism of dualism. This same philosophical tension reappears in numerous traditions, most clearly in the Upanishads, and persists through every serious conversation about reality, order, and perception.

1. Genesis 1 as Radical Monism: The Absolute One

Genesis 1 presents a cosmos originating from a singular creative act, performed by the Elohim, i.e. the ‘gods’. The creative process is rhythmic, ordered, and uniformly declared “tov”—commonly translated as “good,” though this word must not be moralized. There is no mention of ra (bad), and therefore, no conception of contrast, negation, or “otherness.”

This is monism in its purest form:

- There is no second.
- All that is, is one—qualitatively consistent, without internal contradiction.
- Only variations of ‘good’ exist.
- All ‘goods’ are equivalent. There is no judgement.
- *Tov* is not moral or functional but indicative of intrinsic harmony, completeness, and singularity.

This echoes Procedure Metaphysics and nondual philosophies such as Advaita Vedanta: what is real is One, and distinctions, indeed variations of the One, are illusory or downstream artifacts of limited observer perception.

But the Genesis 1 monism, while metaphysically self-evident, becomes locally unworkable—in other words, humans cannot exist in a world without distinction, hierarchy, or boundary. The uniformity of ‘good’ offers no space for freedom, conflict, adaptation and development. No friction, no choice, no narrative.

2. Genesis 2–3 the generation of relativistic Dualism

The second creation narrative, beginning in Genesis 2:4b, reflects an epistemic rupture. Suddenly, the creator is not distant Elohim but a more personal, adaptive

deity who forms man from clay and reacts dynamically to creation. The world now includes:

- Differentiation (man and woman),
- Limitation (the forbidden tree),
- Consciousness of duality ('good' and 'bad'),
- Punishment for non-compliance, i.e. death, labour, suffering, and shame (and their opposites), rather than sin, a later moralistic interpretation.

Here, *ra* enters the scene—not as evil (a later, Christian moralistic imposition), but as difference, negation, boundary. The Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Bad is the symbolic moment where the one becomes two—dualism is born, and with it, relativity.

This dualism is, from the monist standpoint, a metaphysical error—reality is not two. Yet, as a framework for lived experience, it is brilliantly functional. It permits narrative, agency, morality, law, and adaptation. It allows for fractal emergence—reality unfolding through recursive distinctions, relationships, and tensions. What is false becomes useful.

Genesis 2–3 does not “correct” Genesis 1—it compromises it. It accepts that the absolute truth of oneness must be broken for human consciousness to function. This mirrors a core Upanishadic insight: that the Self is one but appears as many for the sake of experience (*maya*), not because of any intrinsic duality.

3. Human Agency as the Engine of Fracture

Critically, the text shows that it is the lack of effective variation of Oneness that forces the divine hand. In Genesis 3:22, the creator, the Elohim, says, “*Behold, the adam has become like one of us...*”—a statement that implies not omniscience, but surprise, reflection, and reactivity. The monistic world has been compromised from within, not by external rebellion but by an inherent flaw in the local application of the One.

The need for actual difference that emerges identity and realness in time-space compels the monist system to break into dualism. Only relativity allows differentiation, and only differentiation allows life as we experience it.

4. The Elohim, Yahweh and the Evolution of Divinity

It should be emphasized that:

- Yahweh is not present in Genesis 1 and appears only later as a local, adaptive god.
- The name Elohim, a plural meaning ‘the gods’, is later interpreted as operating as singular in both Genesis 1 and 2—a deliberate priestly political device that masks early henotheistic pluralism under a veneer of unity.
- The “us” of “*like one of us*” is not a Trinitarian hint but a pantheon echo—a sign of theological multiplicity still embedded in early Israelite thought. “*like one of us*” also states that the Adam rose to the level of the gods rather than fell (into sin).

The move from Elohim to Yahweh reflects the shift from metaphysical unity to political utility. Yahweh is the god who works—not necessarily the true or only god, but the god who can be spoken to, feared, bargained with, and who changes his mind. That is, a dualistic deity for a dualistic world.

5. No Morality, No Evil—Only Differentiation

Finally, the Genesis narratives contain no moral framework in their original form. *Tov* (good) and *ra* (bad) are not virtue and sin. They are conditions of being, without judgment. The introduction of “evil” as a category is a later priestly imposition, useful for social control but absent from the actual text.

This reading exposes the priestly misappropriation of Genesis 2 as a morality tale, as a crime and punishment parable. By contrast Genesis 1 functions as metaphysical parable about the emergence of difference within unity, and the loss (or suspension) of the One for the sake of many.

Conclusion: Genesis as a Philosophical Mirror

Genesis 1–3 encodes, perhaps unwittingly, a profound and recurring philosophical reality:

- Monism is true: all distinctions collapse under the weight of unity.
- Dualism is false: the Many do not truly exist apart from the One.
- Yet dualism works, and monism does not—at least not within the relativity of time, space, and form.

Genesis therefore joins the Upanishads in illustrating that what is universally true and undifferentiated and what is locally useful because differentiated are not identical. What is false because selected and limited may generate structure; what is true and limitless may remain inaccessible. Creation begins in absolute oneness which of actual existential necessity becomes functionally fractured thereby emerging duality and relativity, and the rest of the biblical story may be read as an effort—often clumsy or tragic—to resolve the tension between the two.