

## GOD, THE PUZZLE-MAKER:

Interpretation as Divine Design/Assignment ----- Elliott #1641

The puzzling quality of human life is purely intentional, as derivative from the divine nature as The Golden Hare of Masquerade was from Kit Williams, whose puzzle was announced\* last night (15Mar82) as solved (and, day before, in New York, by someone giving me an NYC newsclip and someone else giving Loree and me the book MASQUERADE (Schocken/n.d.)). (\*On National Public Radio.)

This solving of a contrived puzzle which had gained international attention for months "came together" for me this morning in my devotional reading of Luke 18.34, which I'll translate here thus: "Of their Lord's announcement--the third!--of his death and resurrection, the disciples could make no sense. They just couldn't connect (*sun-i#mi*, send-together, put-together) this with what else they knew about Jesus: its meaning was hidden from them: they didn't know (*gino'sk.*, \*grasp the meaning of) it. No matter how hard they tried on their own, the anguishing experience didn't "come clear" for them. (Think of clarity, a single color on each side, as the fascinating goal of the international puzzle sensation just preceding Masquerade, viz. Rubik's Cube.)

The public forever finds fascinating the geniuses of putting together --in America, especially the master-tinkerers such as Edison and Bucky Fuller. When I entered the latter's lab (as a thinktank member) at the U. of S.Ill., I found it full of tinkertoylike models such as one would expect of some idiots savant! Fuller is famous for a feisty bon mot on ours as the swimming-upstream species (my wording): "We are here to counteract the Second Law of Thermodynamics. Yes, physical things are falling apart at a terrific rate; people, on the other hand, put things together." This notion is at the heart of the work of a great American novelist, Annie Dillard, whose PILGRIM AT TINKER CREEK is a literary masterwork of puzzling on nature's and life's wondrous puzzles and using the very puzzlement to create beauty and peace and joy---like Rilke's "Be patient toward all that is unsolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves." Her art and philosophy are in LIVING BY FICTION (H&R/82)--in which she says "I do not know" whether art expresses the order of the universe or only reflects our human penchant for order-making (sense-making). (Books whose title include "put together" or synonyms tend to sell well--e.g., Jas. Glasse's PUTTING IT TOGETHER IN THE PARISH.)

\**G(i)no'*-, Greek's most common root for "knowing," means to grasp the sense of something by "seeing" (in contrast to the Jewish supreme sense, viz. hearing and obeying and so knowing). "For the Greeks the eye is a more reliable witness than the ear, and sight is ranked above hearing" (Kittel.TDNT.I.691). Modes of seeing-knowing: observing, weighing circumstances, reflecting on facts (the latter two are INsight), deciding, resolving--but(*ibid.*) "Nowhere is there a complete abandonment of the basic idea of visual and objective verification." (Thus, sententious sayings, "gnomes," are sights-insights: clever opinion, good counsel, rule of life, pronouncement, will, decision (but, *ibid.*, "the Greek concept of will and resolve is to be interpreted in the light of seeing"). But not all knowledge derives from human striving: sight-insight is sometimes divine gift (from *logos, nous, pneuma* -- i.e., by revelation. (So the "gnostic" piety centers in the praxis of openness to revelation-illumination.) Puzzles unyielding to our efforts are sometimes solved from beyond us, as Jesus Resurrectus interprets his own death (e.g., Luke 24)). When we say "I don't get it," sometimes it's given to us; we see after "I don't see it."