

## H.P. BLAVATSKY on RELIGIOUS INTOLERANCE

### ON GOD AND PRAYER

*The Key to Theosophy*, pgs. 61-66

ENQUIRER. Do you believe in God?

THEOSOPHIST. That depends what you mean by the term.

ENQUIRER. I mean the God of the Christians, the Father of Jesus, and the Creator: the Biblical God of Moses, in short.

THEOSOPHIST. In such a God we do not believe. We reject the idea of a personal, or an extra-cosmic and anthropomorphic God, who is but the gigantic shadow of *man*, and not of man at his best, either. The God of theology, we say — and prove it — is a bundle of contradictions and a logical impossibility. Therefore, we will have nothing to do with him.

ENQUIRER. State your reasons, if you please.

THEOSOPHIST. They are many, and cannot all receive attention. But here are a few. This God is called by his devotees infinite and absolute, is he not?

ENQUIRER. I believe he is.

THEOSOPHIST. Then, if infinite—*i. e.*, limitless— and especially if absolute, how can he have a form, and be a creator of anything? Form implies limitation, and a beginning as well as an end; and, in order to create, a Being must think and plan. How can the ABSOLUTE be supposed to think—*i. e.*, to have any relation whatever to that which is limited, finite, and conditioned? This is a philosophical, and a logical absurdity. Even the Hebrew Kabala rejects such an idea, and therefore, makes of the one and the Absolute Deific Principle an infinite Unity called Ain-Soph.\* In order to create, the Creator has to become active; and as this is impossible for ABSOLUTENESS, the infinite principle had to be shown becoming the cause of evolution (not creation) in an indirect way —*i. e.*, through the emanation from itself (another absurdity, due this time to the translators of the Kabala)<sup>†</sup> of the Sephiroth.

ENQUIRER. How about those Kabalists, who, while being such, still believe in Jehovah, or the *Tetragrammaton*?

THEOSOPHIST. They are at liberty to believe in what they please, as their belief or disbelief can hardly affect a self-evident fact. The Jesuits tell us that two and two are not always four to a certainty, since it depends on the will of God to make  $2 \times 2 = 5$ . Shall we accept their sophistry for all that?

ENQUIRER. Then you are Atheists?

THEOSOPHIST. Not that we know of, and not unless the epithet of "Atheist" is to be applied to those who disbelieve in an anthropomorphic God. We believe in a Universal Divine Principle, the root of ALL, from which all proceeds, and within which all shall be absorbed at the end of the great cycle of Being.

ENQUIRER. This is the old, old claim of Pantheism. If you are Pantheists, you cannot be Deists; and if you are not Deists, then you have to answer to the name of Atheists.

THEOSOPHIST. Not necessarily so. The term "Pantheism" is again one of the many abused terms, whose real and primitive meaning has been distorted by blind prejudice and a one-sided view of it. If you accept the Christian etymology of this compound word, and form it of **pan**, "all," and **qeod**, "god," and then imagine and teach that this means that every stone and every tree in Nature is a God or the ONE God, then, of course, you will be right, and make of Pantheists fetish-worshippers, in addition to their legitimate name. But you will hardly be as successful if you etymologise the word Pantheism esoterically, and as we do.

ENQUIRER. What is, then, your definition of it?

THEOSOPHIST. Let me ask you a question in my turn. What do you understand by Pan, or Nature?

ENQUIRER. Nature is, I suppose, the sum total of things existing around us; the aggregate of causes and effects in the world of matter, the creation or universe.

THEOSOPHIST. Hence the personified sum and order of known causes and effects; the total of all finite agencies and forces, as utterly disconnected from an intelligent Creator or Creators, and perhaps "conceived of as a single and separate force"—as in your cyclopædias?

ENQUIRER. Yes, I believe so.

THEOSOPHIST. Well, we neither take into consideration this objective and material nature, which we call an evanescent illusion, nor do we mean by *pan* Nature, in the sense of its accepted derivation from the Latin *Natura* (becoming, from *nasci*, to be born). When we speak of the Deity and make it identical, hence coeval, with Nature, the eternal and uncreate nature is meant, and not your aggregate of flitting shadows and finite unrealities. We leave it to the hymn-makers to call the visible sky or heaven, God's Throne, and our earth of mud His footstool. Our DEITY is neither in a paradise, nor in a particular tree, building, or mountain: it is everywhere, in every atom of the visible as of the invisible Cosmos, in, over, and around every invisible atom and divisible molecule; for IT is the mysterious power of evolution and involution, the omnipresent, omnipotent, and even omniscient creative potentiality.

ENQUIRER. Stop! Omniscience is the prerogative of something that thinks, and you deny to your Absoluteness the power of thought.

THEOSOPHIST. We deny it to the ABSOLUTE, since thought is something limited and conditioned. But you evidently forget that in philosophy absolute unconsciousness is also absolute consciousness, as otherwise it would not be *absolute*.

ENQUIRER. Then your Absolute thinks?

THEOSOPHIST. No, IT does not; for the simple reason that it is *Absolute Thought* itself. Nor does it exist, for the same reason, as it is absolute existence, and *Be-ness*, not a Being. Read the superb Kabalistic poem by Solomon Ben Jehudah Gabirol, in the Kether-Malchut, and you will understand:—"Thou art one, the root of all numbers, but not as an element of numeration; for unity admits not of multiplication, change, or form. Thou art one, and in the secret of thy unity the wisest of men are lost, because they know it not. Thou art one, and Thy unity is never diminished, never extended, and cannot be changed. Thou art one, and no thought of mine can fix for Thee a limit, or define Thee. Thou ART, but not as one existent, for the understanding and vision of mortals cannot attain to Thy existence, nor determine for Thee the where, the how and the why," etc., etc. In short, our Deity is the eternal, incessantly *evolving*, not *creating*, builder of the universe; that *universe itself unfolding* out of its own essence, not being *made*. It is a sphere, without circumference, in its symbolism, which has but one ever-acting attribute embracing all other existing or thinkable attributes—ITSELF. It is the one law, giving the impulse to manifested, eternal, and immutable laws, within that never-manifesting, *because* absolute LAW, which in its manifesting periods is *The ever-Becoming*.

ENQUIRER. I once heard one of your members remarking that Universal Deity, being everywhere, was in vessels of dishonour, as in those of honour, and, therefore, was present in every atom of my cigar ash! Is this not rank blasphemy?

THEOSOPHIST. I do not think so, as simple logic can hardly be regarded as blasphemy. Were we to exclude the Omnipresent Principle from one single mathematical point of the universe, or from a particle of matter occupying any conceivable space, could we still regard it as infinite?

*The Key to Theosophy*, pgs. 61-66

H.P. Blavatsky

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## INDEPENDENT THOUGHT—GODWARD

“What Are The Theosophists?” *The Theosophist*, October, 1879

H.P. Blavatsky

[Collected Writings, Vol. II, pp. 102-03]

All original thinkers and investigators of the hidden side of nature whether materialists—those who find in matter “the promise and potency of all terrestrial life,” or spiritualists—that is, those who discover in spirit the source of all energy and of matter as well, were and are, properly Theosophists. For to be one, one need not necessarily recognize the existence of any special God or a deity. One need but worship the spirit of living nature and try to identify oneself with it. To revere that Presence, the invisible Cause, which is yet ever manifesting itself in its incessant results; the intangible, omnipotent, and omnipresent Proteus: indivisible in its Essence, and eluding form, yet appearing under all and every form; who is here and there and everywhere and nowhere; is All, and NOTHING: ubiquitous yet one; the Essence filling, binding, bounding, containing everything, contained on all. It will, we think, be seen now, that whether classed as Theist Pantheists or Atheists, such men are all near kinsmen to the rest. Be what he may, once that a student abandons the old and trodden highway of routine, and enters upon a solitary path of independent thought—Godward—he is a Theosophist, an original thinker, a seeker after the eternal truth, with “an inspiration of his own” to solve the universal problems.

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## THE ABSTRACT IDEA

“The Beacon-Light of the Unknown” *The Theosophist* 1889  
[*Collected Writings*, Vol. XI, pp. 265-66]

H.P. Blavatsky

Every country has had its saviours. He who dissipates the darkness of ignorance by the help of the torch of science, thus discovering to us the truth, deserves that title as a mark of our gratitude quite as much as he who saves us from death by healing our bodies. Such an one awakens in our benumbed souls the faculty of distinguishing the true from the false, by kindling a divine flame, hitherto absent, and he has the right to our grateful worship, for he has become our creator. What matters the name or the symbol that personifies the abstract idea, if that idea is always the same and is true! Whether the concrete symbol bears one title or another, whether the saviour in whom we believe has for an earthly name Krishna, Buddha, Jesus or Aesculapius, --also called “the saviour god” --we have but to remember one thing: symbols of divine truths were not invented for the amusement of the ignorant; they are the *alpha* and *omega* of philosophic thought.

“The Beacon-Light of the Unknown” *The Theosophist* 1889

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