

A Broader Conception of Deity

Let me carry you in thought, if possible, to a broader conception of Deity — the Absolute, the Supreme, nay more, the Omnipresent Divine Essence in everything visible and invisible. He who is inspired by this broad conception would soon find himself outgrowing the old limitations of the belief in a personal God. He would begin to realize that there are invisible laws so close at hand, touching all life, that if man could only understand them, he could rise in his strength and become, without struggle, without strenuous effort, without fear or suffering, free from the bondage and thralldom of the old theological ideas that have been taught to us during recent ages. I often wonder if the progressive minds of the age realize the strong psychological power of the old dogmas which seem to be teeming in our very blood. Truly we are the progeny of the ignorance of the past, and we have much to learn ere we can lift the burdens from our fellow-men.

Let us take this idea of Deity. Deity pervades the whole Universe: it is impersonal, unknowable, no matter how near we may draw to the light of it. It is the absolute, the Goal which we climb towards forever, forever learning and growing in the will and power to serve; forever acquiring new and grander ideals of That towards which we climb.

Think of the great Supreme Source of Life that holds the stars in their places, that orders nature and its wonderful mysteries, that gives to mother and father the sacred privilege of parenthood. Think of these and then tell me who can limit the Universal, Supreme Deity! Who can attempt to limit human life? At your best moments, at your silent moments, when either by despair or joy you have been moved to a state of contemplation, of analysis, of questioning, of yearning, think a moment, have you not sometimes almost felt the touch of this divine power in your longings and in your aspirations? Think what it would be if the human mind could be ever conscious of the fact that man is part of the great, central, spiritual life, a ray of the Supreme!

He who understands this, knows what is the dignity of Man; and that the religion which alone will fitly correspond to our innate religious nature will be a universal system of human brotherhood based on the knowledge that we are essentially divine; a system that will warm our hearts with the knowledge that there is nothing outside ourselves that can save or damn us; that it is we ourselves who alone must and can work out our own salvation.

It is impossible to gage the significance of the present time or to realize what is in store for humanity during the next hundred years, merely from our own experience and from recorded history. For this is no ordinary time; it is not simply the culminating point of the past hundred years, but of thousands of years. The night of centuries has passed, and with the new dawn comes the return of memories and powers and possibilities of an age long past.