

WILLIAM BLAKE  
ON  
THE LORD'S PRAYER

J. H. CLARKE, M.D.



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(1757—1827)

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BY

JOHN HENRY CLARKE, M.D.



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MCMXXVII.

**“To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the Immortal  
“Eyes of Man inwards into the Worlds of Thought ;  
“into Eternity ; Ever expanding into the Bosom of  
“God, the Human Imagination.”**

TO  
"THE YOUNG MEN OF THE NEW AGE"  
— OUR OWN —  
WHOM BLAKE ADDRESSED  
IN  
DESPAIR  
OF FINDING VISION AND UNDERSTANDING  
IN HIS OWN TIME  
THIS FRAGMENT  
IS  
DEDICATED  
IN  
HOPE.

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## PREFACE.

*Some thirty odd years ago, having a long journey into the country before me, I put into my travelling-bag the Aldine edition of Blake's poems. Up to then I had been familiar with the "Songs of Innocence and of Experience." I had now the isolation from external affairs and the solitude sometimes to be found in a long train-journey, and I embarked upon that amazing document, "The Everlasting Gospel." From that moment Blake gripped me with a hold which time has only strengthened.*

*Blake says his conception of the most sublime poetry is an allegory addressed to the intellectual powers and entirely hidden from the corporeal understanding. My "corporeal understanding" did not attempt the task of comprehending, but my inner understanding knew it for divine truth.*

*Since that day I have seized every opportunity which has come in my way of acquiring such aids as have presented themselves of educating my corporeal understanding up to such a point that I could shape for myself, and possibly for others, the essence of the Message which Blake completed on his death-bed just*

one hundred years ago. And there has been no lack of such aids. They have been gathering in numbers and power for the last half-century and scarcely a day now passes in which some addition to them of moment is not announced.

One of Blake's designs depicts Nebuchadnezzar in his madness. We live, as Blake lived, in a Nebuchadnezzar age. We are madly clinging with hands and feet to the materiality of earth when we should be standing erect upon it or moving over its surface ruling empires of the mind. Blake has revealed to us, as no one else ever did before, what those empires are, and what are the powers in man of recognising them and of exercising his rule.

The point of advantage in our age over that in which Blake lived and wrote is this, that now there is a wide-spread recognition of the fact that the material diet on which our minds are banquetting can never satisfy the soul of man. Thus it is coming about that the more like Nebuchadnezzar man becomes in mentality the keener is the revolt against the madness. That the revolt is taking many forms, some of them only a little less insane than that against which it is protesting, need not be denied; but the revolt itself is an advance.

The essence of the Revolt means this, that although we are all more or less wedded to our own conceptions

*of eternal truth and mistake our conceptions for truth itself, yet the discovery of our error is awakening our minds to rebel against the obsession. Our conceptions of truths are much dearer to our temporal egos than are the truths themselves, and anything which militates, or appears to militate, against our finite conceptions we resent as personal injuries. And the Revolt against this cardinal error is the one thing which Blake is arousing in every line he writes and every stroke of his pencil and graver and brush. His inspiration will not allow him to "cease from mental fight" against this Satan—Man's self-hood or temporal ego—until the temporal personality of Man has subjected itself and all it loves and desires to the deity whose throne every man is.*

*One aspect of this mental fight, which Blake is urging with ever-increasing ardour, is to be found in his pencilled comments on a certain academic version of the Lord's Prayer, and it has seemed to me that around this as a text may be drawn a picture of the Spiritual Form of Blake in his contest with "The Accuser of Sins," the God of This World.*

*J. H. C.*

*Pett Level,*

*Good Friday, 1926.*

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First published 1863.

The first book to make known to the world the Man and his Works in a comprehensive volume. A new edition edited by W. Graham Robertson was published by John Lane in 1906.

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*The quotations from Blake's writings, except such as are embodied in the text, will be found printed in special type. No inverted commas will be needed therefore to distinguish them, and such as do appear will be Blake's own. The Capitals are also his.*



## CHAPTER I.

### SELF - KNOWLEDGE

**I**T is told of a certain university tutor, not unversed in the works of Plato, that he had an original question to put to every pupil whom he received. The question was something like this: "Well, Mr. Studiosus, is your ignorance simple or compound?" "I am afraid, Sir," was the usual rejoinder, "I fail to understand the distinction." "Simple ignorance" he would explain, "is when you don't know, and you know you don't know. Compound ignorance is when you don't know, and you don't know you don't know." Conversely, there is simple and compound knowledge—a knowledge which knows that it knows, and a knowledge which knows and is quite

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unconscious of its knowing. This latter kind of knowledge is called instinct in the animal world. It is the knowledge of the spider which enables her to weave her web on strict mathematical principles; the knowledge of the bee which impels her to build her cells on the most economical lines, the knowledge of the swallow which teaches her to find her way back from the south to her northern nesting place of yester year.

In the human economy there is an infinite variety of the same kind of unconscious, and semi-conscious knowledge. "Intuition" is the name by which some part of it is known, and this means "inward vision." It implies the possession of a faculty of seeing things which are hidden from the external senses, a faculty which pre-supposes the existence of an invisible organism with invisible organs within the visible body. Again, every human being possesses a knowledge of the profoundest alchemy by means of which he is able, for

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example, to transmute bread into blood. The ordinary man does not know that he has this knowledge, and yet he exercises it, and that without the help of any other person. It is only when the occult machinery by which he works the miracle is out of harmony that he becomes conscious of its presence through the language of pain.

This is only one among numberless instances of knowledge in man which man's simple knowledge does not know. It is compound knowledge—the knowledge which knows it knows—which man must now acquire, and with this his whole existence as part of nature is in process of endowing him. Experience, indeed, is the Daily Bread which is being alchemised by him into soul self-knowledge. To attain this end the bread of one life-time is by no means sufficient. How many it may require depends upon the aptness of each individual pupil in his successive schools of life.

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This much every man does know—that he has a Will to create ideas, and a Mind to execute his designs; that he has affections and emotions—all this he knows, and he also knows that will, desire, mind, affections, emotions, are all intangible, invisible and imperceptible to his external senses.

It is not a great step from this point to the consciousness that he is himself in possession of a dual nature and is leading a double existence, one material and sensual and one immaterial. For the moment, the former, the sensual world, seems to claim all his allegiance, for he is apt to designate it as his “real” world, as distinguished from the world which he knows to exist, but which is beyond the compass of his five senses to define.

This is the natural result of the present topsy-turveydom in the world's affairs. The spirit of man is submerged—head downwards—in the material. The kingdom of the world is the Kingdom of the Material, and the god of this World is the divinity of its worship.

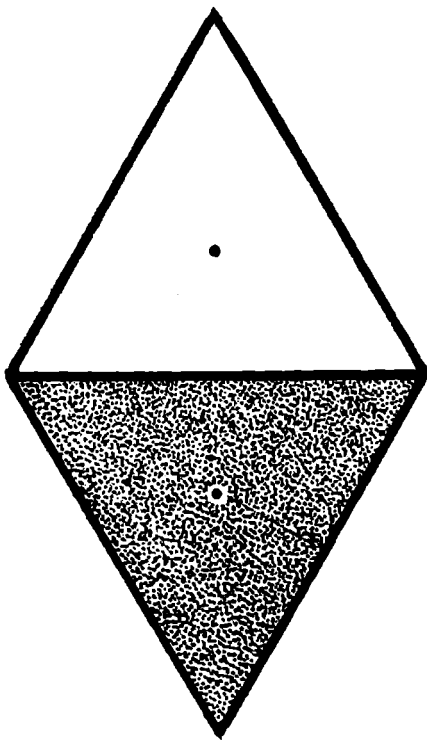
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But although submerged the spirit of Man has never been and never can be extinguished. From the remotest times there have been those whose vision was unconfined by material organs, who were able to read the language which is independent of human speech, and which is found expressed in countless signs and symbols. Symbols may be and often have been turned to base uses, but for those who can read them they tell their true story. The human body is itself a symbol.

There is a symbol of great antiquity, representing two equilateral triangles, one with its base parallel with earth and its apex pointing upward, the other with the same-base line and its apex pointing downward. The latter triangle is the shadow of the former and represents the temporal and mortal part of man as the other triangle represents his spirit and soul.

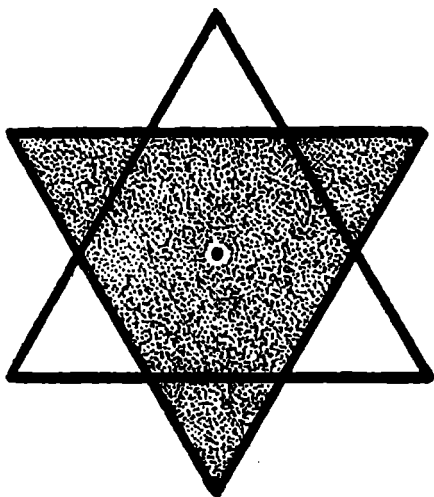
Now the shadow triangle has risen until it has almost obscured the first and has brought the centres of the two to coincide,

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THE PERMANENT EGO AND ITS  
SHADOW.

SELF - KNOWLEDGE



THE SEAL OF SOLOMON.

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and when the centres coincide we have the "Seal of Solomon"—*dæmon est Deus inversus*.

This is the great Event which has happened in the Universe of Man. The Mind of Man is this central point—with its double aspect and double polarity, and the conflict, or controversy, between these two polarities is the origin of the "Fall of Man," of Creation, of Nature herself, and constitutes the Celestial Bread of Man's experience out of which his Self-Knowledge grows.

The shadow triangle represents the material part of the bodily organisation with its apex polarised downwards or outwards, towards the material. The real and permanent triangle represents the invisible, indestructible organism in man, polarised upward or inward, away from all that is material, finite and temporal. The mental organism of man is the arena in which the two centres—the infinite and the finite—are fused, and the self-consciousness of the one is being constantly lost within that of the



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other ego. The whole of life, of history, of politics, of creation may be found in this one point.

There is in life nothing real which has not its shadow and nothing true which has not its counterfeit. All the development of every individual consists in his making continual choice between these two. There is a real ego in every man and there is also a shadow ego as there is in every animal. The shadow ego knows itself as—that is to say, believes itself to be—a separate, self-existent entity; which it is not. There is nothing separate in the universe. Everything is related to every other thing and connected with every other thing. But that is not the worst of the trouble. This illusory, temporal, shadow, counterfeit ego, with its downward and outward polarisation, claims dominion over the real, invisible infinite ego which is, as it were, married to it. The end of every life is for every infinite ego to recover its

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own self-consciousness—self-knowledge—and to claim the kingdom of the Man for its own. Then will there be but one triangle—the shadow will be digested and transmuted into essential substance and will vanish. The umbilical cord which fetters man to the material and sensual attractions of mother Nature will be severed, there will be one polarisation only—to the true centre; Man will be reborn.

It must not be supposed that the real ego is either unconscious or inactive all the time that he is under the dominion of his shadow. There is no act of kindness, of self-denial, which he does not prompt. There is no right choice made between truth and error which he does not inspire. And whenever the shadow will is allowed to conquer in a fight the pangs of conscience in the shadow are the witness of the true ego's protest.

The conquest of the real over the shadow self may take an age or it may take place in a moment of time.

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Many years ago I remember reading of an instance of the latter kind. A quarryman was engaged, in supervising the haulage of stones up a very deep shaft. It was his duty to receive each load at the top, and if any fragments fell to give warning to those below with the cry "Ware out." This enabled those below to stand clear before the stones reached the bottom. One day his own foot slipped and he himself fell down the shaft. But as he fell the cry "Ware out" rang clear down the shaft—and his own body after it. In that supreme moment of self-forgetfulness of the outer ego, the inner ego found its own self-knowledge. In mystic parlance, the quarryman had "squared the circle" and had "found the philosopher's stone."

It is possible to obtain a conception of individual man's place in the great universe by a consideration of his own blood-stream. To ordinary sight blood looks like an uniform red paint, but the

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microscope reveals that it is composed of an infinite number of separate living bodies floating in a fluid medium. Every one of these bodies has its own life, its own function, and some of them behave as if they had independent wills and movements of their own. And to a certain extent they have. And yet their life is not separate from the life of the blood-stream, and the life of the blood-stream is not separate from the life of the organs and tissues which it feeds and from which it originates. And the life of the blood and of the organs and tissues is not separate from the life, the mind, the soul, the spirit, the will and the understanding of the man of whose organism it forms part. In actual fact the life of the one is the life of the other.

So is it with each individual man and woman in the great universe. They are in no wise separate from or independent of the life, mind, heart and soul of the planet, of the solar system and the entire

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great universe. If we picture to ourselves every one of our own blood corpuscles as being under the illusion that it is something complete in itself with separate aims and separate interests we can understand a little of the illusion under which we are all enslaved until our own inner senses awake and we learn to know ourselves as we actually are.

“Polarisation” is a word which contains a key to unlock many secrets. The entire visible animal organism like the blood itself, is made up of countless myriads of living organisms all within the microcosm of the individual, and all with individual wills, so to speak, of their own. Every organ, every tissue, every organic fluid is made up of living cells and their products. Every cell has its own body, soul and spirit—membrane, nucleus and nucleolus or innermost centre; its own life-history and destiny. And every cell has its own polarity. The cell elements are all

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polarised—have their powers focussed towards and in their own nucleolus or centre. But the centres have also their own polarity; all the centres of every organ are polarised to that organ's vital centre. The organs themselves, again, have each its own polarity, and all are polarised to the particular centre immediately above, be it flesh, blood, gland, nerve, solar plexus, spinal cord, brain, up to the invisible mind and emotional centre of the man. When there is no assertion of independent individual will on the part of any cell or any organ then is the organism in a state of health. When any of this proletariat asserts a will and rule of its own, independent of the innermost centre, there is disorder, disease, ruin, corruption, and if vital connections are cut, revolution and death of the microcosmos—separation of the life from the form.

Let it not be supposed for a moment that the shadow-self has not its profoundly important uses and purposes in the organ-

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ism, one of which is to provide an exercise-ground for practising the faculty of choice. The light of the moon, which is a reflexion of the light of the sun has its uses. But if we mistake the origin of the moon's light, and attribute it to the moon itself we are in error. The events of outer existence appear to our outer ego real and solid and permanent. Our inner ego knows them to be temporal and derived. Nevertheless we are obliged to accept the convention that they are real, and to act as if they were. Just in the same way we do not refuse to accept the light of the moon although we know it does not originate with her. Thus the events of outer life provide us with discipline and judgment by accepting them at their face value. But, all the same, we must *know* that they are passing and illusory.

Nevertheless they are *real illusions*, and if the inner ego recognises them as such, then all will be well. It is the error

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of mistaking them for eternal realities which brings all the trouble. This is insanity. But if we were to *act* as if they were illusions, that also would be insanity. We are existing in a world of conventions, and nothing is to be gained by pretending that we are not. The two planes—the inner and the outer—the ruler and the ruled—though united, are discrete and should be kept each in its own place.

When this knowledge is attained—when Man can envisage Life from the standpoint of his Eternal ego—Man can be said to know himself with a compound knowledge—with a knowledge that knows that it knows.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE TWO VISIONS

THE foregoing chapter may seem a somewhat long preamble on the way to Blake, but there is still some distance to travel before we can appreciate the passion which consumed him when confronted with a materialised interpretation of one of the most spiritual documents in the world's treasury. And as that is the version which nearly all the world of Christianity accepts at the present day, it becomes necessary that we should be able to find our way out of the shadow-consciousness—the five-sensual world—into Blake's world of Light and Vision. For it was in this world, the world of intuition, that Blake lived and saw and thought and designed and wrote. The five senses were to him so many

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“windows” of the soul lighting man in his “caverned” state (the mortal body), but by no means limiting his possibilities of vision. To accept the evidences of the senses, as if they told all the truth, was to Blake supreme folly. To look *through* them, as through a window, was wisdom; to see *with* them, as if they were the faculty of vision and not its instrument, led only to error. Thus it becomes necessary to rise above the “Five windows of the Soul,” which “distorts the *heavens*”—the “heavens” be it noted—“from pole to pole,” and to develop the inward vision—*intuition*—if we are not to be perpetual slaves of illusion. For this internal vision is just as much an integral part of man as are his flesh and bones. This inward vision is in continual operation, but in ordinary mortals this is part of the unconscious knowledge which does not know that it knows. The consciousness of that part of man, which is rightly described as animal intellect has not yet made contact with it.

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It may be fairly said that the sense of sight is the premier sense of the five. Sight is the mystical sense. In the sensual world all things are divided by this sense into two sections—the Visible and the Invisible. This is not so to the same extent with the other senses. But it is necessary to remember that this is not the same division as between the material and the immaterial. For there are infinitely more things in the universe which are material and yet invisible than there are which are discernable by the mortal sense of sight. The air we breathe is invisible, but yet it is matter. Oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, are equally invisible and yet they are matter. Oxygen and hydrogen united become visible as water, and water becomes invisible as steam. So that the test of sight is not the test of matter.

Take, for another example, an egg. We see the shell of an egg and say we have seen an egg, but we do not see the yolk, the white, the germ, the lining membrane,

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until we break the shell. And when we have broken the shell and have seen all these, we have not really seen the egg, for the egg is much more than them all. The egg is a living organism, comprising powers and principles invisible which are capable of developing from the egg an active, mobile, sensitive, conscious entity.

And we have not even seen the shell of the egg, though we think we have. We have seen its colour and shape, but we have not seen the innumerable pores through which the coming chick will draw its breath, and from which, if the shell is varnished, or covered with flour, no chick will ever come. The *life* of the shell no man has ever seen, and yet it is there ready to transfer its lime into the blood and bones of the bird, and leave the shell so thin that when incubation is complete the bird can easily break it and escape.

We have not seen—no mortal eye has ever seen—the Life-principle of the egg. It is there all the same, ready to vitalise

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the embryo which contains, in epitome, every organ, every cell, every feather of the egg's two parents, to be revealed to sight later on, if it finds the proper conditions. Life is invisible, indestructible, infinite. Life may be driven from a form but it cannot be destroyed. It can be driven from an egg by excess of heat as in cooking, or by putrefaction, but the *Life* is not destroyed. And when the egg becomes a bird of the air, there is revealed to the Poet's vision, something vastly greater than the form which our senses perceive :

How do you know but every bird that wings  
the aery way  
Is an infinite world of delight shut in by  
your senses five?

How much invisible intelligence can be packed into the compass of a tiny egg-shell may be gathered from an incident which happened to a medical friend of mine. In the course of a country ramble he came upon a water-hen's nest on the margin of a lake. Alarmed by his approach the

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mother bird took to the water and swam away, followed by her brood, leaving what appeared to be one egg behind in the nest. Thinking that this was a spoiled egg, my friend picked it up, when, to his amazement, out dropped a bit of animated fluff into the water and *swam away after its mother like the rest*, leaving an empty shell in his hand.

Recurring to the physiological fact of the relationship of the cells of the human blood to the being of man, let us imagine one of these elements becoming conscious of its relationship to the universe of the man who has created it—how it is part of the man's body, mind, soul, spirit, having a body, soul, spirit, life of its own, and yet not its own personal, separate possession—then we can gather some idea of the individual man's place in the infinite universe, the macrocosm. Man's five senses separate man into divisions and compartments, and so long as we understand that this separation, division, is a convention

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for the use of man's corporeal understanding, and not a spiritual fact no harm is done. It is a convention which is necessary for man's temporal, corporeal mind on its way to spiritual evolution.

As no man can truly say that he has ever seen an egg, so, in like manner, it may be said that no mortal eye has ever seen any human being. All that the eye has seen of man is his shell or outer garment, whilst the real Man who has made his own visible part just as surely as the snail has created its own shell, is invisible and intangible to the outer senses.

But to the Seer the organism which weaves the visible "garment" of Man is not invisible. "The Soul is form and doth the body make" wrote Spenser, and the Poet sees the soul and the soul-world even more clearly than he sees the world of matter.

"I assert for myself," wrote Blake, "that I do not behold the outward creation, and that to me it is hindrance and not action.

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'What!' it will be questioned, 'when the sun rises, do you not see a disc of fire, somewhat like a guinea?' Oh! no, no! I see an innumerable company of the heavenly host, crying, 'Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord God Almighty!' I question not my corporeal eye, any more than I would question a window, concerning a sight. I look through it, and not with it."

The two poems from letters to Mr. Butts are vivid examples of the nature of the vision which was habitual to Blake. At one time it was two-fold—he sees the symbol and its meaning. Again it is three-fold and yet again it is four-fold:

Now I a four-fold vision see,  
And a four-fold vision is given to me;  
'Tis four-fold in my supreme delight,  
And three-fold in soft Beulah's night  
And two-fold Always.—May God us keep  
From Single vision, and Newton's sleep. \*

By "Newton's sleep" Blake referred to Newton's dictum "God can only be known

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\* Letter to Thomas Butts, 22nd, Nov., 1802.



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by his attributes." The knowledge which depends on corporeal reason and experiment is a profound sleep when compared to the interior vision and soul-self-knowledge of the spiritually awake. In the quatrain of his "Auguries of Innocence" Blake again describes the vision which is the native property of the unfallen soul of man:

To see a World in a Grain of Sand,  
And a Heaven in a Wild Flower ;  
Hold infinity in the palm of your hand,  
And Eternity in an hour.

This vision man lost when he stepped from the State of Innocence into the State of Experience, when he began to taste the Bread of Knowledge and put on the garment of his five-sensual body, which is also his tomb, from which, if he cannot transcend his limitations whilst in the body, kindly death will release him to find Self-Knowledge in his interior faculties, which have lain buried since his entry into his material Form.

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The human Form is a symbol, and a symbol taken apart from its signification is an idol, and those who worship such symbols are idolators. Of such idolatry the world of civilisation is full. The savage with his totems knows better.

That Blake always saw the spirit within the form is evident throughout his life, and his complaint against his age was that it was blind. In Art from his boyhood the painters and poets who felt and saw and interpreted the spiritual world were those who attracted him, and those whose works went no further than the delineation of material forms were to him anathema. Raphael, Michael Angelo, and Albrecht Durer were his heroes among painters and designers.

According to Blake there are in Man three powers—Painting, Poetry and Music—which have not been “swept away by the flood of Time and Space,” and by which it is still possible for man to “converse with Paradise.” The Poet or

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the inspired man, "Poiētēs"—the word is Greek,—is a "Maker" or "Creator," and the Poetic Genius is the Inspiring Deity. Painting is the Art which speaks to man through the symbolism of Colour and Form. Music is the embodiment in sound of the "Word," the "Logos," whose utterances are human beings.

I have said something in this chapter about the Egg and its Shell. One of Blake's symbols for the entire material universe is that of the Shell of the World-Egg; he called the Visible Creation "The Mundane Shell." Inside this World-Shell the Soul of Man is in process of being hatched. Most people regard Creation as being an end in itself. That is not Blake's vision of Man: Creation for him is a Means and not an End. Consequently those who look for something finished and complete in this phase of things are looking for something which is not there. A half-hatched chick is a sad looking object, but

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it is only passing through a phase which is essential to it before its perfect vehicle can be attained. And that is precisely the state in which Creation finds itself at present. Nevertheless, in the midst of what appears to be almost pure chaos, the Divine Image still is there concealed, and the Perfect Bird will emerge from its Shell when Hatching-Time is ripe.

### CHAPTER III.

#### THE JEWS' GOD

JUST as truly as God made man in His own Image, so man makes his God in *his* own image. If a man has a material mind, he will worship a material God. If he has a Satanic mind he will worship Satan. If he has a sectarian mind he will create and worship a sectarian God. If he has a revengeful nature he will create for himself a god of vengeance and revenge. If he is a Pharisee, his God will be a Pharisee. If a man believes that his temporal personality is all that there is of him he will fashion for himself a corporeal limited deity. If he imagines himself to be a thing de-

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pendent on the personal favour of an almighty celestial monarch, his God will be a magnified Augustus Cæsar.

If, on the other hand, a man sees himself a vital part of the Universe—a leaf on the Tree of the Life of Infinity, of which he is an integral part—he will worship the Universal Spirit of Divine Wisdom in whom all things subsist. It was Blake's complaint against his age that it had put a limit on deity and had thus become itself limited, according to the ancient occult maxim that a man "becomes" that which he "beholds," the "eyes" being the "instrument" of "marriage" and sight being the mystical sense. It had been prophesied, he wrote, that all the world would become subject to the Jews, and this, he said, is exactly what has come to pass, for "all the world believes the jews' code and worships the jews' god, and," he asks, "what greater subjection can be?"

The "Code of the Jew" will be dealt with in the following chapter; suffice it to

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say here that Blake refers chiefly to the Ten Commandments (which are, in a sense, the antithesis of the Lord's Prayer) and the pharisaic doctrine that man (and consequently his God) can have a self-hood separate from the Universal Will. The result of this is that the Jew has created for himself—and, alas! for us—a pharisaic God whom Blake has depicted in his great designs of Urizen, the "Accuser of Sins," the "God of this World," who has entangled humanity—and finally himself—in his net of Druidic religion which demands the sacrifice of others, in contradistinction to the Christian religion which demands the sacrifice of self,

It is an unfortunate complication of true vision that names have, to a very large extent, taken the place of actualities, that the shadow man is mistaken—by himself and others—for the essential being, and that an infinite number of persons who think themselves Christians are actually worshippers at the shrine of Satan.

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In the Epilogue to his poem, "The Gates of Paradise," Blake thus addresses "The Accuser of Sins, who is the God of this World":

Truly, My Satan, thou art but a Dunce  
And dost not know the Garment from the Man.  
Every Harlot was a Virgin once  
Nor canst thou ever change Kate into Nan.

*Though thou are worshipped by the Names Divine  
Of Jesus and Jehovah, thou art still  
The Son of Man at weary night's decline,  
The lost traveller's dream under the hill.*

The italics are mine. The Verse is accompanied by a design of the "Lost-Traveller" under Sinai's Hill, whose dream is Lucifer. This is another way of putting into words the gospel saying that not all who say "Lord Lord" will find themselves acknowledged.

A prologue to the same poem "The Keys of the Gates" opens with these words:—

Mutual forgiveness of each vice—  
Such are the Gates of Paradise.

—which, again, are a translation of a clause in the Lord's Prayer. No man can forgive



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his own sins, any more than a man with only one hand can cut his own finger-nails. Forgiveness relates to a second person. The Forgiveness of Sins which Christianity enjoins is not getting forgiveness for one's own sins, but granting forgiveness to those who have injured us. And since each individual is an integral part of the Universe, and as the Universe consists of one's own self *and* all the other selves, in forgiving others we are actually forgiving our greater "self."

There can be, therefore, no admission to Paradise except through the Gates of the Forgiveness of others, which is a doctrine directly opposed to the Spirit of the Ten Commandments, which Blake calls "The Accuser's chief desire": and the Prologue to the same Poem concludes with this couplet relating to the "dead corpse" of these "stony commands":—

Oh Christians! Christians! tell me why  
You rear it on your Altars high?

—a question, by the way, which has never been answered.

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“Bible history” is universally recognised to be something very different from that which is generally known as “history” outside the Bible. In point of fact it is not history at all, and only touches the written and recorded histories of the nations at certain points. The Jews claim for themselves a miraculous origin just as some other races do. But there is this difference. Other nations, with their fabled ancestral gods and demi-gods have left some tangible evidences of their power and greatness in the monumental buildings, temples and inscriptions which remain with us to this day. Even the cave men have done this much, but the Jews have not one stone with one Hebrew inscription to show of their legendary heroes.

The real origin of the wandering tribe which has scattered itself all over the world will perhaps never be settled. Some say their progenitors came from the province of Oude in India and from this were named “Ioudaioi” by the Greeks. They boast

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that they are all descended from the patriarch Abraham, but this is clearly confuted in the New Testament, and St. Paul roundly says that the story of Abraham and his two wives and two sons is an allegory with a spiritual meaning. The very name of their putative parent is suggestive of Brahma and the ancient Brahmins of India. "A-Braham" is, in fact, "Brahm-a," and the Jews have as much right to take the name to themselves as they have to take the names of "Montagu" and "Montmorency."

One great function and service of the Jews in the world is that of being the World's great collectors. They have a perfect genius for collecting and preserving the works of other peoples, whether literary or artistic. For this function they are eminently qualified on account of the highly mixed nature of their race and blood.

When a man boasts of a certain thing we may be pretty certain that this is his

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weakest spot. It is the same with a race, and the "Children of Abraham" myth is a case in point. The late Mr. Israel Zangwill,—who, by the way, has given us a very graphic description of the character of his race in his poem "Israel"—has described America as being "The Melting-pot of the Nations." But the description applies much more exactly to his own race. It might be truly called a "melted-pot of Asiatic and African races." Palestine, which Jews call theirs, never was inhabited by them as a pure tribe. The land has always been a sort of "Macedonia." But apart from that, as long as there is any record of them in profane history they have been a scattered tribe, polygamous wherever polygamy has been the custom, and at one time, at least, an entire tribe of Tartars was absorbed into this melting-pot. The admixture of negro blood in the Jews is very evident in many Jewish individuals whom we constantly meet in our streets, and medical investigators who

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examined the blood of the various components of the forces engaged in the Mesopotamian campaign found abundant black elements in the blood of all the Jews examined. The fact that some Jews of Asia and Africa are as black as the darkest negroes, and that all shades of colour exist within the tribe, is another evidence that the tribe itself, as it exists at present, is a "Macedoine" of humanity.

This fact accounts for the extraordinary versatility of the Jew, and it may also account for the characteristic above referred to, that of being the collector and preserver of the works and treasures of other peoples. Among these collections are some of the myths of the ancient world, a number of which are contained in the books of the Old Testament.

That the Jews are a people who originally possessed a language of their own, Hebrew to wit, is one of the notions which they have industriously spread, but there

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is no evidence that such was ever the case. The nearest thing to a language of their own which they ever have possessed is Yiddish, and that is a mixture like the race itself, a German dialect written in Hebrew characters and read from right to left. Hebrew itself is a hieratic language originating in Egypt, written without vowels or stops. The Jews in adopting it as their own sacred language gave it some of their own characteristics and introduced "points" and stops to bring it into line with other languages. But thereby they corrupted it as they corrupt everything corruptible which they touch. In ancient days Aramaic and not Hebrew was the principal language they spoke.

How far the scriptures, gathered from many sources, which we now know as the Old Testament, were originally Jewish will, in all probability, never be known. But much of it has, in the process of adoption, acquired characteristics which are undoubtedly Jewish. Translation into

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Greek in the Septuagint, has, perhaps, modified this somewhat, and, again, by translation into continental languages further modification has been effected. The various Councils of the Church which settled the Canon of the Scriptures excluded much which is now collected in the "Apocrypha." The English Version, which was made at a period when our language was at its perfection, has communicated to the Old Testament much of the spirit and piety of our race and a dignity of style which is an incomparable treasure.

But all this could not alter or eliminate the character of the Jewish deity. Whatever Jewry touches it materialises. Whatever Jewry tells us its laws command it to do, that we may be certain it is leaving undone, and whatever it is ordered to avoid that we know is the very thing which we are sure to find it engaged in.

The consequence of this has been that all the documents which have come into the possession of Jewry have received a

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material interpretation at their hands, and all the world which has accepted this interpretation has come under the spell.

The early chapters of the Book of Genesis, which deal with a myth of profound spiritual significance, have been made out to contain a "history" of the origin of this particular globe and of the Jewish race as its heirs apparent, and all the ingenuity of theologians has been bent to the task of endeavouring to make a respectable human entity out of the materialised deity which the Jews have created for themselves. Not being themselves capable of seeing "Man," but only his "garment,"—only the visible part of his body which he leaves behind him at death, and not at all the invisible organism of which this is no more than the shadow,—not being able to perceive the soul and spirit of Man which never were generated, or, as Blake calls it, "vegetated," and which never can die, they could not help producing a God who is partial, who



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cares for the material welfare of the Jews and their advancement in worldly possessions above all other peoples, and who takes vengeance on the peoples who resent their religion, and on themselves if they do not keep his laws. And as these laws are of such a nature that they cannot be kept, a scheme of forgiveness is arranged for them by which they can obtain it through the cruel sacrifice of innocent animals.

Of course the "animals" which man *has* to sacrifice are the animal desires and passions in his own organism. It is only in this way that he can approach to the highest sphere in his own being. The only Paradise man ever had or ever will have is in his own mind and brain, where also may be seen the Tree of Life and the Rivers which water it. The Holy Land and the Throne of Divinity are to be found in the Heart of Humanity and all the wars and horrors which have followed the delusion that Deity favours one spot of earth more than another, and loves one man's

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progeny more than another man's, might have been spared mankind if it had not been for the materialising of spiritual things wrought by the tribe which boasts itself as being the Chosen of its God.

The English reader of the Bible unconsciously, or consciously, reads into the Bible stories a spiritual meaning, but for all that he cannot get away from the dominance of the Jews' Satanic God.

It is belief in this God which is the parent of almost all the "Atheism" of the present day, and it is disbelief in the divinity of Man which is the parent of this inhuman Jewish idol.

The Jews' God is his tribe personified. The tribe itself is the unit, not the individual as with more evolved races.

That God does and always did converse with honest men Paine never denies. He only denies that God conversed with Murderers and Revengers such as the Jews were, and of course he holds that the Jews conversed with their State Religion which they called God and so were liars as Christ said.

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This is Blake's way of putting it. And in the Preface to the Third Book of *Jerusalem* he shows how easy it is to confound the two religions :—

Man must and will have Some Religion ; if he has not the Religion of Jesus, he will have the Religion of Satan, and will erect the Synagogue of Satan, calling the Prince of this World, God, and destroying all who do not worship Satan under the name of God. Will any one say, "Where are those who worship Satan under the Name of God?" Where are they? Listen! Every Religion that Preaches Vengeance for Sin is the Religion of the Enemy and Avenger ; and not of the Forgiver of Sins, and their God is Satan, Named by the Divine Name. Your Religion O Deists! Deism is the worship of the God of this World by the means of what you call Natural Religion and Natural Philosophy, and of Natural Morality or Self-Righteousness, the Selfish Virtues of the Natural Heart. This was the Religion of the Pharisees who murdered Jesus.

In the *Jewish World* of 15th March, 1925, an inspired writer expressed the same eternal truth thus—"Fundamentally Judaism is Anti-Christian."

## CHAPTER IV.

### THE JEWS' CODE

IT is the aim of the Jew to make Gentiles believe that the writings of the Old Testament contain the religion of the Jew in its completeness; that all the pious reverence which Christians give to the Old Testament, especially to the Psalms and the Prophets, is shared with them by the Jews, and that they and the Jews are at one in that respect. A closer reading of passages in Deuteronomy and elsewhere would reveal the error of this notion. When the Jew is told that he may practise usury on Gentiles but not on Jews; that he is not to eat the flesh of animals which have died a natural death, but that he may feed the stranger

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within his gates on it, and he may even sell it to a Gentile outsider, the principle that the Jews' God has one law for the Jew and another for the Gentile is revealed beyond the possibility of spiritualising away.

But the Old Testament, with its double morality and its Ten Commandments is, after all, not the first or the last word in the Code of the Jew. That is to be found in the Talmud. The Old Testament is nothing to the Jew apart from the glosses and sophistications of the ancient scribes and rabbis who compiled this amazing work. It is amazing in its bestialities, its sophistries and its blasphemies. But it is the real Code of the Jew for all that. The tribe boasts that in presenting the world with the Ten Commandments it really invented the moral sense, and it celebrates annually the compliment its God paid to it on the alleged day of the alleged month when "the law" was "given" to the Jews by Moses on Mount Sinai. The "Giving of

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the Law" is one of the principal feasts of the Jews' year.

The strength of a chain is the strength of its weakest link. The Talmud may contain moral and humanitarian maxims, and these same maxims may be taught to Jewish children in their Talmud Torahs. But the Talmud is a secret book and not intended for Gentile consumption.

The fundamental difference between the Jew and the Christian is shown in nothing more clearly than in the way in which they severally treat their sacred books. The Christian believes the written Word of his Scriptures to contain the only method by which the soul of the individual can be saved from destruction. It is, therefore, natural for him to do his best to spread the Book, through which he believes he has found nourishment for his soul, throughout the world in all the languages man speaks.

The Jews' method is the opposite of all this. The Talmud is not to be found on bookstalls. There is no society formed by

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Jews to provide the world with it gratis, or translate it into all the tongues. If this were done it is safe to say the world would soon make an end of the Jewish "religion," if not of the Tribe itself.

Among its many boasts--for Jewry can only live among the nations by perpetual boasting and advertisement of its supposed virtues—is this, that it is "The people of the Book." By this it is intended to make Gentiles believe that the "Book" of which it is "the people" is the Old Testament which they also revere. But that is not at all the case. The "Book" of which they are "the people" is their Talmud. And the Talmud is also their "fatherland," and not Palestine, nor Poland, nor Johannesburg, nor even New York. The Jew poet, Heine, well said that the Jews have a "portable fatherland," their "Torah."

How fatally this Torah has infected Christianity and its Churches is revealed in another inspired saying of this same Jew. "Puritanism," he said, "is only

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Judaism with the addition of a license to eat pork." It is the deliverance of men's minds and souls from the blight of this puritan mentality which Blake felt himself inspired to effect. His poem "Milton" is devoted to this object. He felt that Milton came to him in spirit in order to urge him to undo the injury wrought by the doctrines of his great poems. The austere religion of the Pilgrim Fathers is depicted for us by Nathaniel Hawthorne in his novel "The Scarlet Letter." The puritan deity of the Welsh Calvinists is portrayed in the terrible books of Caradoc Evans. The Puritan Cromwell,—glorified in recent years by the Scotch Puritan, Carlyle,—a man of blood and iron, who was financed by Jews and who employed them as his spies, paid the tribe for their services to himself by handing over to them England—England which had been free from them since the days of King Edward I., one of the very greatest rulers England ever possessed. It is not without significance that a Scottish Premier



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of England, the son-in-law of a Rothschild, has erected a statue to Cromwell in Westminster, but the instinct of the nation refused to allow it to be placed within the House of England's Parliament, and it has to be content with a place in an area outside.

The essence of puritanism is that it is a religion of self-righteousness as is Judaism. And puritanism is not confined to any Church. Rome no less than Geneva has produced examples in abundance of votaries at the shrine of Sinai, which demands that humanity shall be ordered by some external God to obey certain laws and be schooled into obedience to them. Only by so doing can the crown of self-righteousness be obtained. The inspired puritan, Bunyan, revolted against the creed in his epic story of the Pilgrim, and beautifully described the religion of Sinai as the burning mountain to the foot of which Christian was seduced by "Mr. Worldly Wiseman" of the "Village of Morality."

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According to Blake "obedience" can make no man "good." Virtue comes from within. "Religion" as popularly understood is imposed from without in "stony" laws and commands. Blake said it was absurd to take "laws of prudence and call them laws of God." "Prudence," he said, "is a rich, ugly old maid courted by Incapacity"; all Christ's acts arose from "impulse" and not from obedience to laws.

The fact is, the "law of God" is not written on any tables of stone or on tables of any material thing. It is written in the essence of things, in the heart and conscience of humanity. It is written in the progress of the sun through the twelve signs of the Zodiac. It is revealed in every grain of sand, and in every herb and tree, in every animal, and every man. It has many forms and has received many names, the "force of gravity" being one of them, "attraction and repulsion" being another, "polarity" another, manifesting as "male and female," "right and left," "love and

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hate," "positive and negative"—but *not* as "good and evil." "I care not," says Blake in the words of one of his creations, "whether a man is good or evil. All I care is whether he is a wise man or a fool ;" and in another passage he says, "The combats of good and evil is eating the fruit of the Tree of Death. The combats of Truth and Error is eating of the Tree of Life." Blake saw Humanity *whole* and not in the sections which the Five Senses necessarily impose on those whose vision is confined to what they show. He saw Man's corporeal Reason claiming for itself a separate self-hood and falling by this very claim, into division—into creation, in fact.

The claim of the Jews that "inspiration" ended with the last book of the Old Testament, and of Christians that it ended with the Book of Revelation, was regarded as blasphemy by Blake. According to him there is nothing of permanent value in life that is *not* the fruit of inspiration. "The

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daughters of Memory," the inspirers of classic poetry, were to him of very minor consequence. "The daughters of Inspiration" were his only loves. "There is no God," he exclaims, "but that God who is the Intellectual fountain of Humanity." To put a limit on the capacities of the Great Humanity Divine is the direst blasphemy; as disbelief in Humanity is the worst form of Atheism.

Thou art a Man. God is no more.  
Thine own Humanity learn to adore.

The puritanic divinity is the Satanic Urizen, become a self-hood and demanding righteousness and obedience to his stony commands.

But these stony commands, which to Blake's horror, Christians raise on their high altars, are after all not so low as the Code of the Rabbis. The poet Goethe said of the first of these same commands, "Thou shalt not kill," that there was no tribe on earth except the Jews who

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were base enough to require to be told that. But the Rabbis are not content with even that. Their gloss upon it is that it only means "Thou shalt not *kill a Jew*." In the words of the Talmud (*Tosefta, Abda Zara VIII, 5*.) "If a Gentile kills a Jew he is responsible, but if a Jew kills a Gentile he is not responsible."

## CHAPTER V.

### GOOD AND EVIL

I HAVE already referred to the passage from Blake in which he says that "the combats of Good and Evil is eating of the fruit of the Tree of Death." It is necessary to be a little more explicit on this matter or we shall not be able to follow much of his thought.

"Good" and "Evil" are purely relative qualities. They are not essential actualities but depend entirely on the illusion of the separate self. The source of evil resides in the belief in self-hood. Self-denial does not mean abstaining from some favourite indulgence and giving the proceeds to a good object; it means

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denying that our self-hood has any real existence at all. This belief—the belief that our mortal, temporal self-hood has any essential separate reality—is the evil belief from which we are to pray to be delivered.

Man's personal ego belongs to time, and Time—Kronos—Saturn—is the devourer of all its children. The dark triangle is the reflexion in Time of the white triangle, which is the real, essential, eternal, infinite Man. The light of the moon has in itself no essential reality as originating in and from the moon. It is a reflexion only of that which issues from the sun. The moon is the symbol of Nature as the Sun is the symbol of eternity. Man is an Eternal but the Spirit of man has been so long imprisoned in a vehicle derived from Time, that it has come to believe it is itself a child of Time. But man's Spirit may be consciously, if it so wills, a child of Eternity, knowing itself to be such, endowed with, and not imprisoned in, a vehicle of

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Time, through which it may gather experience—its Daily Bread—and attain growth until it expands into its own proper infinite divine dimensions and recognises Itself.

“The combats of Truth and Error is eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life.” The great error, the original Lie, is the belief that the Spirit of man is mortal, that his vehicle is himself. It is the belief of the blood-corpucle that it is something in itself, and is separate from the life and spirit of the organism which has produced it. Every sin which man has committed or can commit has arisen from this poisonous lie. This is at once the serpent and the apple, and it is to be found in the paradise of every man and woman born. It is in fighting this error that man gains life and strength throughout his existence in Time, and when Time has devoured all that is temporal, and therefore its own, in his constitution, Man will then have recovered his lost freedom, his raised body



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will have been freed from material limitations, his Paradise will have been regained.

For everything which has been or can be created must be annihilated. Only that which is wholly pure and divine can endure.

The fighting of this primeval Error is what Blake calls Spiritual Warfare, and Spiritual Warfare gives life as temporal warfare gives death. That is what he means in the line "I will not cease from *mental* fight." For it is the *mind* of Man which is the arena of the battle. Man's mind is the meeting place between the soul of nature and the soul of immortality, and it is there that the conflict occurs.

The cardinal error of the Garden of Eden is nowhere more vividly manifested than in the belief that the Scriptures are "history." They are just as true and just as little historical as are the events of Bunyan's inspired dream. We are explicitly told that "The letter killeth" and

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that it is the spirit *and* the letter, the spiritual interpretation, which gives life. And yet we have all the Christian Churches, and all the sects, from their temporal and mortal readings of the letter of Scripture as if it were history, claiming that they alone are right, and making war upon one another on the basis of that misunderstanding. It is on this misunderstanding alone that the Tribe of modern Jewry claims to have rights to a land which is not theirs, and it is this which is setting the nations of the world at loggerheads through Christians' adoption of this false view, a view inspired by the tribe itself.

The adoption by Christians of the Jews' god for their own deity has led to most of the trouble which confronts the Churches and sects to-day. An extra-cosmic deity with a limited personality who can be angry and jealous, and can be placated like any Cæsar is the god the Jews have planted on the Christian world.

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To Blake God was no extra-cosmic, external deity, but was part of Man as Man is part God—as a single cell of man's body is part of the organism of the Man. As the universe of Matter is the body of deity made manifest, so the physical body of man is the visible part of man's soul and spirit. In Blake's vision man's spirit is infinite as God is infinite, and the fact that it has a physical vehicle does not limit it thereto. Blake perceives that man has to be awakened from his deadly sleep in which he dreams that he is limited; he perceives that man is Spirit as God is Spirit, manifested in Time and crucified in Matter; that Spirit is all and that Matter is Spirit condensed; that "Adam" is the "limit of contraction"—"shrunk up to a little root, a fathom long,"—and that "Satan" is the "limit of opacity" through which no spiritual light can penetrate.

We say "the pen writes"; but the pen does not write, neither does the hand write

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with the pen. It is the spirit which writes, passing "through the portals of the brain down the right arm." We say "the tongue talks"; but the tongue does not talk, only the spirit talks through the instrumentality of the tongue. The spirit of man is infinite, but being "drowned in the deluge of Time and Space" it no longer knows itself, except by flashes, and imagines itself to be the vehicle in which it works. This is the outer self, the shadow self, on the digestion, extinction, and annihilation of which its own resurrection depends.

That Christianity has survived in spite of the enthronement of the Jews' god of this World is due to the fact that the reason of the outer senses on which the existence of the Jews' god depends is not the controlling power with most Christians. Happily, logic is not their strong point. It is possible to hold a number of mutually contradictory "beliefs" without our noticing the fact. The organism which is

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popularly known as the sub-conscious, or the sub-liminal self—the one which transmutes the bread we eat into blood and bones without our knowing it—is also capable of doing many other things quite regardless of what the logical faculty may approve. Thus it comes about that the interior faculties of Man may attain to substantial truth whilst correct logic based on faulty or imperfect data may lead only to error. “All religions are one,” says Blake, and the same may be said of all churches and all sects. They are so many different approaches to the Temple of Truth, created by and adapted to the particular limitations of the minds of their adherents. “Religion”—from *religere*—is, or should be, the binding of man back to his source in the Supreme. But in ordinary use the word “religion” connotes much that is the opposite of this, and in Blake’s writings the word almost exclusively refers to this bad sense. It is a power which “binds,” truly enough, but instead of uniting the shadow ego with

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the Supreme Power from which it originated, it seeks to bind the infinite within the terms of the finite, with its "Thou shalt," and its "Thou shalt not," until the "Mistaken Demon" of the Jews' god is enthroned as the World Power.

The Moral Law of Sinai—"one law for the lion and the ox, which is oppression"—is the outcome of this code. Not that the Scribes of Jewry are content with Ten Commandments, their Talmud has multiplied them till they now number Six hundred and thirteen. Virtue, says Blake, is something positive and infinite and not a thing which can be codified and restrained. The word "Virtue" is derived from *Vir*—"Man"—and connotes all that is of true manhood and manliness. "Morality" is something of a very different order. It belongs to "manners"—*mores*—as "ethics"—*τα ἠθικα*—belongs to "customs," and is of the earth, earthy. What is "moral" in one part of the world is "immoral" in another part. The old

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Sunday-school division of humanity into "good men" and "bad men" belongs to this order, and derives from the shadow-consciousness of man, and not from his divine centre, from the illusory aspect of the temporal, and not from the eternal in Man.

Charles Kingsley betrayed the Jewish strain in him when he wrote the words :

"Be good, sweet maid, and let who  
will be clever."

Outside a nursery or a Sunday School it is impossible to "be good" to order, as it is impossible to "be happy" to order anywhere. Righteousness is a perfectly impossible ideal in this shadow phase of existence, but Truth is not; and the separation of Truth from error is the prime function of life on this plane.

Although overwhelmed in the Deluge of Time and Space, Man's spirit is not dead. In fact there could be no life if it were. In spite of the domination of the temporal, illusory ego, the real ego is ever coming to the surface in Man's mind.

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It is to the temporal plane that the distinction between "good" and "evil" belongs, and it is the eating of the fruit of the Tree which gives the consciousness of this difference that brings experience; and experience eventually leads to the death of the illusion. The warfare of the spirit of man against acceptance of the illusion for the real is eating of the Tree of Life. Blake felt it to be his mission, his order, his instruction, his inspiration to show the world that the cherubic guard at the Tree of Life was now removed by his writings, and that the eating of the fruit of the Tree of Life was henceforth open to all.



## CHAPTER VI.

### BLAKE'S GOD

**A**LMOST two centuries before Blake appeared on this scene, there was born another seer of visions, Jacob Boehme. Boehme was born in 1575, Blake in 1757. Both were "uneducated" in the ordinary sense of that much abused word, Boehme being a shoemaker and Blake never having been to school. But both were endowed with the faculty of soul-vision, which sees *through* and not *with* the mortal eye, and both were able to understand the things of man's true nature, the things of the Spirit which is the child of eternity, and is only a traveller through Time :

This life's five windows of the soul  
Distorts the *heavens* from pole to pole,  
And leads you to believe a lie  
When you see *with*, not *through* the eye,  
Which was born in a night, to perish in a night,  
When the soul slept in beams of light. \*

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\* *The Everlasting Gospel*, Section d.

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That is to say, if we take that which the soul can perceive through the limited external senses as being All, we believe a lie and all our apprehensions of spiritual things—"the heavens"—are "distorted from pole to pole."

When a man believes that his temporal, personal self is all that there is of him, he shuts himself out from his own eternal life and adopts an animal existence.

The seer does not require to be convinced by argument and reasoning—he has vision and knows. There is an occult saying that a man becomes what he beholds. If he only sees external things he is an external, if he sees the soul of the living universe he becomes himself a living soul. If he sees only a material world he is himself material, if he sees infinite divinity in everything, he is himself infinite and divine. If he sees God in Man, Man becomes God. The Incarnation and the Crucifixion are both comprised in the saying that "God became as we are that we might be as He is."

## BLAKE'S GOD

The fundamental difficulty with the conception of the deity entertained by the majority of Christians is that they accept the Jewish idea that God is "Somebody Else," and not all that is real and permanent of themselves. It has been said that the Rugby Arnolds are of Jewish extraction, but whether that is so or not, the poet of the family, Matthew Arnold, certainly revealed oriental traits. In the famous phrase in which he described the deity as "A power *not ourselves* which makes for Righteousness" he spoke as the Jews think and speak. Blake's God was our very self, our only real self. Tennyson had the true conception with his "Closer is He than breathing; nearer than hands and feet."

Again, Matthew Arnold is Jewish in his putting "Righteousness" as the end and aim of all things. This is Blake's "Urizen"—"Your Reason"—who claimed for himself a separate self-hood and exalted himself over all that is called God and so introduced disorder into the Cosmos.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

An exclusively literal reading of the Bible makes it appear that Man is one and that God is Somebody Else. When we read "The Lord said unto Moses," or when a Prophet says "Thus saith the Lord," we imagine that some external deity was present and ordered his "servants" to say or write as he dictated. This is the "distortion of the heavens" of which Blake complained. For him there was only one God, who is the Inspirer of Poets and Prophets, and who always has been "the Intellectual fountain of Humanity." For him the "Heavens" were in the soul of every Man and nowhere else; man is not separate from God, and God is not separate from man.

Consciousness is Being. Where and what man's consciousness is there and that is he. If man's consciousness is fixed in that part of himself which is limited, in his temporal personality which has a name in the world's directory, his God is necessarily also a limited Being, such as is the Jews'

## BLAKE'S GOD

God, which has been imposed upon and accepted by the bulk of Christianity.

It may be well in this connection to reproduce three aphoristic statements engraved by Blake in the early part of his career. They may be called three, although the second is a second edition and amplification of the first. The title of the two is "There is no natural Religion."

In Blake's day the rationalising section of the intellectual world endeavoured to make out that Religion was a matter of Reason and was evolved from Nature. Nature became a divinity to be worshipped, and this was supported by the poet Wordsworth with his laudation of "Natural Piety." To Blake, this was error: there is no such thing, he said, as "Natural Religion," Nature itself being derived, and a creation of the five senses. The worship of "Reason" based on the knowledge derived from the five senses alone was the worship of Satan, the limiting principle, which imposes a separate selfhood on man.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Here follow the three statements :—

### I

#### THERE IS NO NATURAL RELIGION

(FIRST SERIES)

*Etched about 1789*

*The Argument* : Man has no notion of moral fitness but from Education. Naturally he is only a natural organ subject to sense.

I. Man cannot naturally Perceive but through his natural or bodily organs.

II. Man by reasoning power can only compare and judge of what he has already perceived.

III. From a perception of only three senses or three elements none could deduce a fourth or fifth.

IV. None could have other than natural or organic thoughts if he had none but organic perceptions.

V. Man's desires are limited by his perceptions, none can desire what he has not perceived.

VI. The desires and perceptions of man, untaught by anything but organs of sense, must be limited to objects of sense.

*Conclusion.*—If it were not for the Poetic or Prophetic character, the Philosophic and Experimental would soon be at the ratio of all things, and stand still, unable to do other than repeat the same dull round over again.

# BLAKE'S GOD

## II

### THERE IS NO NATURAL RELIGION

(SECOND SERIES)

*Etched about 1789*

I. Man's perceptions are not bounded by organs of perception ; he perceives more than sense (though ever so acute) can discover.

II. Reason, or the ratio of all we have already known, is not the same as it shall be when we know more.

III. [*This proposition has been lost.*]

IV. The bounded is loathed by its possessor. The same dull round, even of a universe, would soon become a mill with complicated wheels.

V. If the many become the same as the few when possessed, More! More! is the cry of the mistaken soul ; less than ALL cannot satisfy Man.

VI. If any could desire what he is incapable of possessing, despair must be his eternal lot.

VII. The desire of Man being Infinite, the possession is Infinite and himself Infinite.

*Application.*—He who sees the Infinite in all things, sees God. He who sees the Ratio only, sees himself only.

Therefore God becomes as we are, that we may be as **He is.**

# BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

## III

### ALL RELIGIONS ARE ONE

*Etched about 1789*

#### THE VOICE OF ONE CRYING IN THE WILDERNESS

*The Argument.*—As the true method of knowledge is experiment, the true faculty of knowing must be the faculty which experiences. This faculty I treat of.

PRINCIPLE 1ST. That the Poetic Genius is the true Man, and that the body or outward form of Man is derived from the Poetic Genius. Likewise that the forms of all things are derived from their Genius, which by the Ancients was called an Angel and Spirit and Demon.

PRINCIPLE 2ND. As all men are alike in outward form, So (and with the same infinite variety) all are alike in the Poetic Genius.

PRINCIPLE 3RD. No man can think, write, or speak from his heart, but he must intend truth. Thus all sects of Philosophy are from the Poetic Genius adapted to the weaknesses of every individual.

PRINCIPLE 4TH. As none by travelling over known lands can find out the unknown, So from already acquired knowledge Man could not acquire more: therefore an universal Poetic Genius exists.



## BLAKE'S GOD

PRINCIPLE 5TH. The Religions of all Nations are derived from each Nation's different reception of the Poetic Genius, which is everywhere called the Spirit of Prophecy.

PRINCIPLE 6TH. The Jewish and Christian Testaments are an original derivation from the Poetic Genius; this is necessary from the confined nature of bodily sensation.

PRINCIPLE 7TH. As all men are alike (though infinitely various), So all Religions and, as all similars, have one source.

The true Man is the source, he being the Poetic Genius.

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It may be helpful to quote here three passages from the writings of Jacob Boehme, which I will take from Dr. Hartmann's volume.

“To believe merely in a historical Christ, to be satisfied with the belief that at some time in the past Jesus died to satisfy the anger of God, does not constitute a Christian. Such a speculative Christian every devil may be, for everyone would like to obtain, without any effort of his

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

own, something good which he does not deserve. But that which is born from the flesh cannot enter the Kingdom of God. To enter that Kingdom one must be reborn in the Spirit." (p. 19)

"The theologians and sectarians keep on continually disputing about the letter and form, while they care nothing for the spirit, without which the form is empty and the letter dead. Each one imagines that he has the truth in his keeping and wants to be admired by the world as a keeper of the truth. . . . As the Israelites dance around the golden calf, so the modern Christians dance around their self-constructed fetishes whom they call God, and on account of this fetish-worship they will not be able to enter the promised land." (p. 20)

Here is another passage which illustrates Blake's saying that to see "with" the corporeal eye and not "through" it is to "believe a lie."

## BLAKE'S GOD

“The superficial reasoner believes that there exists no faculty of seeing except by the exterior eye, and that if that sight has departed there will be an end of seeing. It is very unfortunate if the soul can only see through the external mirror of the eye. What will such a soul see if that mirror is broken?” (p. 2)

## CHAPTER VII.

### IDOL WORSHIP

**WE** are told in scripture that “The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth Life,” but this is a scripture which very few Christians believe. “The Bible, the whole Bible, and nothing but the Bible,” is the cry, and by “the Bible” they mean the literal written word, that every word and every letter (especially in the Authorised English version) has come by direct inspiration. The acceptance of this view has led to the creation of all the sects, which are based on different interpretations of so many different passages. There was some truth in the jibe that in his Reformation—re-formation—Luther had only exchanged

## IDOL WORSHIP

the Pope of Rome for a Paper Pope, which he set up in place of the other. Blake said of Voltaire that with all his ribaldry he had at least done Christianity this enormous service, that he had destroyed the tyranny of the written word as exalted above its spirit.

There is only one Scripture which cannot be falsified and that is to be read in the handwriting of Nature. It is written in the story of the rocks, of the plants and the animal world; and workers in this field have done much to complete the work of Voltaire in destroying the tyranny of this verbal idol. It is just as easy to make an idol of the Bible itself and commit the sin of idolatry—Bibliolatry—in its worship, as it is to make and worship idols of wood and stone. The Scriptures, in so far as they are pure, are spiritual and mystic. But they are a human production and a human collection at best, and thus cannot be free from the errors to which human handiwork is prone.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

But whatever they may be, they are certainly not History, Geography, Biography or Science, and to worship them as such is a most deadly form of idol worship.

It has been said that you cannot make a religion out of a history. This is true; but all the same the bulk of the Christian world are guilty of this very same species of idolatry.

A friend of the writer's, the late Edwin Johnson, an eminent Nonconformist scholar, and a professor in a theological college, not being satisfied with all the evidences of so-called "Bible history" available, asked leave of his college authorities to travel to the centres where the great libraries of the world were to be consulted, including that of the Vatican. He spent two years on the task and the result is to be found in his books "Antiqua Mater" and "The Rise of Christendom." His researches had the result of robbing him of his position. Because his faith having been pinned on to a belief that the Bible was "historic," when

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he made the discovery that it is not, he could no longer fill a chair in an establishment which required that it should be taught.

Neither is the Bible a book to be consulted on Geography any more than is Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress," with its "City of Destruction," its "village of Morality," its "town of Fair-speech" and its "Vanity Fair." An American who had all his life placed his faith in the Geography of the "Holy Land" recently seized the opportunity of the opening up of Palestine to pay a visit to the geographical divinity of his faith. Asked soon after his arrival what he thought of the Holy Land of his religious dreams, he replied sadly, "Well, Sir, *two days in this place has made me an infidel!*" For Palestine is about as unholy a land as can be found anywhere on earth. This pilgrim's geographical idol was shattered and he had nothing better to put in its place.

Neither can Scripture be taken as an authority on genealogies—as a kind of

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*Debrett* of ancient days. It is particularly this claim on which the Jews insist, and if they are robbed of this legend—which by no possible ingenuity can be upheld—all their much proclaimed “rights” to any land, or any position, vanish. People who really possess rights do not ask for them—they take them. If they are wise they use them wisely. Those who grant “rights” to illegitimate claimants to them, are guilty of something like theft, since they are giving away something which is not theirs to give to those to whom it does not belong.

Finally, the Scriptures are in no sense to be regarded as an authority on material Science. It was the assumption of this erroneous belief which led to the persecution by the Church of men like Galileo and Giordano Bruno, and limited by centuries the acquisition of knowledge in one of its aspects. The dogmas of the Church contain all the truths in closed caskets and those who have the key are able to read them. But the priests of the Church with



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the help of the Jews have thrown away the key and materialised all the dogmas, and in so doing have effectually crucified the Saviour.

In spelling out certain series of facts of Nature, Darwin and the evolutionists of old days, together with the readers of the Scripture of the rocks, have done much to break down this idol. The trouble with them is that their vision is limited to what their five senses can show them, and the workings of the invisible powers behind evolution are to them a closed book. Thus it has come about that their work, admirable as it is from one point of view, has had the result of setting up another idol—"Evolution"—in the place of the one which they have destroyed.

In point of fact, if we could only see it, there is vastly more idolatry among Christians, Jews and intellectuals than there is among the so-called heathen.

The futility of teaching as "history" the Old Testament legends to so-called

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heathens is illustrated by a story related in a recent number of a missionary magazine dealing with the South Sea Islands. A native named Tulang had suffered much from malaria and the missionaries explained to him that malaria was caused by mosquitos. Tulang, who had been duly instructed in Bible history asked this question of his instructor : "If mosquitoes are the cause of fever, why did Noah let them into the Ark?" and as the missionary's reply to this historical puzzle was slow in coming, Tulang feelingly added, much to the missionary's relief,—“Well, I hope he was well bitten!” Tulang, it may be added, was not altogether convinced of the truth of the mosquito doctrine. He had been told by a native doctor that his fever came from having drunk of a certain brackish water on a distant island and that he would not be cured until he went again to that island and took another good drink of the same water. This he did and was promptly cured.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### CREEDS

THOSE readers who have been able to follow the trend of Blake's vision thus far will now be in a position to appreciate what he has to say on the Lord's Prayer. But before dealing with that it may be useful to say a word on creeds.

The average creed of the historically-minded reader of the books of the Old Testament may be formulated something like the following :

I BELIEVE IN  
Adam and Eve,  
The Garden of Eden,  
The Serpent,

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The Apple,  
The Deluge,  
The Ark,  
The Tower of Babel,  
Aaron's Rod that budded,  
The ten Plagues of Egypt,  
The Red Sea Passage,  
The Brazen Serpent,  
The Tables of Stone,  
Balaam's Ass,  
The Sun standing still,  
Daniel in the Lions' Den,  
The Whale that swallowed Jonah.  
Amen.

People have been heard to say that they believe the story of Jonah being swallowed by the whale because it is in the Bible, and if the Bible had reversed the story and said that Jonah swallowed the whale, they would have believed that.

Now, a "belief" of that order will save nobody and no thing.

Blake's creed is written at large in every one of his works and in some of them

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explicitly, but, for those who prefer the canonical form, Jacob Boehme, Blake's spiritual peer, has formulated a *credo* which may well be given in this place, as the words very accurately describe Blake's own conception.

"A historical BELIEF," writes Boehme, "is merely an opinion based upon some adopted explanation of the letter of the written word, having been learned in the schools, heard by the external ear, and which produces dogmatists and sophists and opinionated servants of the letter. But FAITH is the result of the *direct perception of the truth*, heard and understood by the *inner sense*." (p. 22)

Like Blake, Boehme, says Franz Hartmann, "taught a conception of God which was far too grand to be grasped by the narrow-minded clergy, who saw their authority weakened by a poor shoemaker, and who therefore became his unrelenting enemies; for the God of whom they conceived was a limited Being, a Person who,

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at the time of his death, had given his divine power into the hands of the clergy," whilst the God whom Boehme and Blake worshipped was still living and filling the universe with his glory. (p. 17.)

### BOEHME'S CREED.

In reply to the charge of heresy made against him, Boehme formulated his *credo* in these words :—

“I acknowledge a universal God, being a *Unity*, and the primordial power of Good in the Universe ; self-existent, independent of forms, unmeasurable and not subject to the intellectual comprehension of any being. I acknowledge this power to be a *Trinity* in *One*, each of the Three being of equal power, being called the *Father*, the *Son*, and the *Holy Ghost* ; I acknowledge that this triune principle fills at one and the same time all things ; that it has been, and still continues to be, the cause, foundation and beginning of all things. I believe and

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acknowledge that the eternal power of this principle caused the existence of the universe ; that its power, in a manner comparable to a *breath* or *speech* (the Word), radiated from its centre and produced the germs out of which grow visible forms, and that in this exhaled Breath or Word (the Logos) is contained the inner heaven and the visible world with all things existing within them." (p. 18.)

\* \* \* \* \*

This was Blake's creed also. The Christ he worshipped was the Infinite Universal Christ who is living and acting in every human soul which is not anti-Christian, and not merely the historic Person whose spiritual Life the gospels describe. It is actually this creed which vivifies all Christians—whether it has reached their self-knowledge or not—and not the belief in any historic person who lived in any geographical place, although the preachers and missionaries may imagine that it is. But it must be admitted that the majority

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of Christians pin their faith on the temporal historic humanity of Christ and not on his infinite, eternal, universal Power, just as they believe that their own temporal personality is all there is that matters of themselves. Thus do Christians create their own Christ after their own image, just as the Jews have created their own pharisaic, Satanic god after their own image. "Is Christ God?" Blake was once asked. "*He is the only God,*" was his reply, and he added, "and so am I, and so are you."

In his great epic he wrote :

Jesus said : "Wouldest thou love one who never died

" For thee, or ever die for one who had not died  
for thee ?

" And if God dieth not for Man and giveth not  
himself

" Eternally for Man, Man could not exist; for Man  
is Love

" As God is Love : every kindness to another is a  
little Death

" In the Divine Image, nor can Man exist but by  
Brotherhood." \*

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\* *Jerusalem*, plate 96.



## CREEDS

The futility of endeavouring to base a faith on history was further exemplified when the near approach of the Planet Mars to the earth set men's minds wondering whether it might not be possible for us to communicate with the inhabitants of that planet, if any such exist. This again set many good people anxiously questioning whether or not the "Martians" were "Christians."

Of course, if there are human beings in Mars, they are like ourselves in being constituted as individuals made up of body, soul and spirit, and capable of self-knowledge. If their soul and spirit are in harmony with the soul and spirit of the planet of which they are part and the spirit of the Universe, they are consciously part of the Universal Christ and are Christians. If they are wilfully in opposition to that spirit, they are anti-Christ; but whether or not they know anything about Palestine and the things that have been written about it, is quite another

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matter. If their "salvation" were to depend on their being able to pass an examination in that "history" it is to be feared they would be eternally damned.

But many of the Christians who are troubled about the souls of the Martians only regard as real Christians those who belong to their own sect—Catholic, Protestant, Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist, Plymouth Brethren, and what not. Sects are based on partial understandings of the literal reading of certain parts of the Bible. And the underlying idea is that only those who understand these as they do can possibly be "saved." But this only leads to division on division and is apt to end in the fate of a worthy couple of the Scottish Capital, which is renowned for punctilious correctitude in doctrinal matters. The couple had gone the round of all the Presbyterian Churches and many others. On each occasion a doctrinal point arose which remained unsolved and resulted in the secession of the two. At last they

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determined to be a sect by themselves, but even that did not avert a tragic end. For the wife, when asked by a neighbour if they were not quite at rest now, was compelled to own that "she was not very sure about"—her husband! \*

Of course doctrinal correctness has nothing whatever to do with spiritual understanding. They are on two entirely different planes of vision. One belongs to the external, temporal, animal intellect, the other belongs to the inner principle which is in every man, but of which most

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\* "All our religious systems are only the works of intellectual children. We ought to repudiate all our personal desires, disputes, science, and will, if we want to restore the harmony with the mother which gave us birth at the beginning; for at present our souls are the playgrounds of many hundreds of malicious animals, which we have put there in the place of God, and which we worship for Gods. \* \* \*

"The true Christian does not cling to any particular sect. He may participate in the ceremonial service of every sect, and still belong to none."—*Jacob Boehme*. (pp. 19, 23)

"Among all sects there is none which possesses intellectually the true religion. We must read the Bible more with our heart than with our brains, until at some future time the true religion will come into the world."—*Paracelsus*.

As it is now four centuries since Paracelsus wrote this, it may be said that the advent of the true religion is somewhat overdue.

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men are, until awakened, profoundly unconscious. When once awakened, "a man is released from the conflict of opinions and possesses self-knowledge," as Jacob Boehme puts it, and Blake has said the same thing over and over again. The God of this world, Urizen, the "Mistaken demon of Heaven," who claimed an independent self-hood and wove the slimy net of his self-righteous religion in which the world is now floundering, is Blake's vision of the result of the idolisation of the letter of Scripture. Happily, in these matters it is the inner apprehension which counts. Many who think they are great sticklers for special points of doctrine really have the inner sense, more or less, awake, and are ruled by this when they think they are being ruled by something else.

The extract quoted on p. 88 from the closing portion of the *Jerusalem* contains the creed by which all real Christians live and by which real conversions are made

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and souls are saved. But, just as many good people would rather have a tooth of the Buddha, or a bone of a saint, than the living spirit of either, so many good people think their friends are atheistic who prefer to find a spiritual meaning in the story of Jonah rather than a record of actual facts.

Man's spirit is confined to the shadow he works in, and unless he is awakened to a knowledge of his true self, he takes for actualities the things of the shadow. He "does not know the Garment from the Man." And the reason why so many "converts" are failures is that the good missionaries do not themselves consciously know the difference. They insist on trying to make their flocks believe in certain alleged facts of external history and geography, forgetting that devils can believe all these without becoming Christians. The internal Man, the internal life was the beginning and end of all things for Blake. The shadowy man—the garment—the natural man—has his function. It is

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to be perpetually changed into its opposite—as bread for humanity is perpetually being converted into blood and flesh. The one is not “good” and the other “bad,” but the shadow should follow and serve and feed the substantial, invisible, eternal man.

There is vastly more essential truth in Han's Anderson's Fairy Tales than is to be found in all the histories. His story of “The Shadow” is a case in point. A learned man of the North visiting a hot country in the South observed one night his shadow, cast by the lamp in his room, fall upon a house opposite whose interior he wished to explore. Therefore he told the shadow to enter when the door opened, and find out for him what was therein. This the shadow did, and in the morning the learned man found himself shadowless. Years after, the shadow returned to him, having acquired in the meantime a bodily human form. The owner, who, on his part, had grown a new shadow in the

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interval, received the old shadow as a guest, and by degrees the shadow led his original about, completely dominated him, imprisoned him, and, finally, executed him.

This is the story of many of the Shadows we meet in the streets at the present day—their owners are imprisoned within them, if they are not actually extinct.

In very truth it is absolutely possible for the mortal part of man, which he derives from his earthly parents—from Nature—to follow and serve and give strength and growth to the inner Man—whose Father is in the man's own heaven,—or to reverse the process and become a tumour on the inner life until it is all absorbed or driven out.

It may be noted here that in the Latin and Greek versions of the Lord's Prayer the first clause reads "Our Father which art in *the heavens*." The word is *plural*. The recognised versions of the Prayer in modern languages, the French, so far as I know, alone excepted, give the word "heaven" in the *singular*. But the plural

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

is important. Every man has his heaven and his hell in his own make-up, and this is implied by the word being in the plural number.

As the Shadow is nothing without the Substance, so the "shadowy man"—in Blake's phrase—is nothing without the spirit. Therefore, it is extremely ridiculous for the Shadow—the temporal personality—to boast itself about anything or to take to itself credit for anything. This is where the folly of "conceit" arises; and it is this which makes conceit the proper object of ridicule wherever it appears. The inner sense of the ordinary man recognises it for what it is.

And this is really the origin and function of the sense of humour. The humorist naturally takes his stand on the upper and inner plane and from thence observes all the incongruities of those who take their shadow-selves seriously, and act and speak as if they were the only things which matter. The value of laughter and the



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sense of humour lies in this, that it exposes this cardinal error. The saying that no one who has once laughed heartily can be entirely bad has much truth in it. Laughter is a mental antiseptic and tonic. Like everything else, laughter can be used for a bad purpose as well as a good one, and things that are worthy can be made to appear ridiculous by malicious minds. But *hearty* laughter is entirely wholesome, since "no man can speak [or laugh] from his heart and not intend truth." Honest laughter is the antidote to folly.

It is extreme folly on the part of the Shadow to claim for itself any virtue or any merit. The Order of Merit is none of its concern.\* This is the meaning of the

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\* The founding of an "Order of Merit" among England's orders of Christian chivalry marks the nadir of English and the zenith of Jewish ideas of honour and honours. The man who said, on being made a Knight of the Garter, that what he liked in the Order was that there was "no damned merit about it," showed much more true Christian sentiment than did those whose brains originated the pharisaical O.M. It would be interesting to watch at a gathering of the Order the expression of mutual self-conscious merit on the countenances of the decorated ones.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

saying "We are unprofitable servants, we have done that which was our duty to do." It is also the meaning of the saying "Judge not." No man in his shadow capacity can condemn another. There is something incongruous even in a scarlet-clad Judge on the bench lecturing the worst of criminals.

The Error of Hero-worship lies in this, that it is glorifying the personal, temporal aspect of the hero—the Shadow and not the Substance. This is certainly *not* "hallowing" the "Name" of the "Father in the heavens."

## CHAPTER IX.

### DR. THORNTON'S TRANSLATION OF THE LORD'S PRAYER WITH BLAKE'S COMMENTS

**I**N the last year of his life Blake scribbled in pencil on the fly-leaves and margins of "Dr. Thornton's New Translation of the Lord's Prayer, London, MDCCCXXVI" his own annotations thereon.

Blake had previously illustrated with wood-cuts Dr. Thornton's translation of the *Pastorals of Virgil*. Dr. Thornton was the author of several other works, chiefly medical and botanical. Blake's quarrel with Virgil and the Classics generally was that they exalted war and empire above Art, and to Blake Art was life and inspiration:

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

“Whoever is not an artist is not a Christian. Christ and his apostles were all artists”—that is, in Blake’s sense.

Commenting on a saying of Dr. Johnson, quoted by Dr. Thornton, that the Bible “cannot be understood at all by the unlearned, except through the aid of critical and explanatory notes,” Blake says :

**Christ and His Apostles were Illiterate Men ;  
Caiaphas, Pilate and Herod were Learned.**

On a passage quoted by Thornton from Lord Byron on the “Ethics of Christ”—“What made Socrates the greatest of men? His moral truths, his Ethics. What proved Jesus Christ to be the Son of God, hardly less than his miracles did? His moral precepts.”—Blake comments :

**If Morality was Christianity, Socrates was the  
Saviour.**

**The Beauty of the Bible is that the most  
Ignorant and Simple Minds understand it best.**

On this passage from Thornton—“Men from their childhood have been so ac-

## DR. THORNTON'S TRANSLATION

customed to mouth the Lord's Prayer, that they continue this through life, and call it saying their prayers."—Blake's comment is:

It is the learned that Mouth, not the Vulgar.

We will now take Dr. Thornton's translation of the Prayer, but before doing so it will be well to give Blake's view of Thornton's entire pamphlet :

I look upon this as a Most Malignant and Artful attack upon the Kingdom of Jesus by the Classical Learned, thro' the Instrumentality of Dr. Thornton. The Greek and Roman Classics is Anti-Christ.

Here is Thornton's Translation :

“ THE LORD'S PRAYER.

“ *Translated from the Greek by Dr. Thornton.*

“ Come let us worship and bow down,

“ and kneel before the Lord, our Maker.

“ *Psalm XCV.*

“ O Father of Mankind, Thou who  
“ dwellest in the highest of the Heavens,  
“ Reverenc'd be Thy Name.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

“ May Thy Reign be, everywhere, pro-  
“ claimed so that Thy Will may be done  
“ upon the Earth, as it is in the Mansions  
“ of Heaven :

“ Grant unto me, and the whole world,  
“ day by day, an abundant supply of  
“ spiritual and corporeal Food :

“ Forgive our transgressions against  
“ Thee, as we extend our Kindness, and  
“ Forgiveness to all :

“ O God! abandon us not, when sur-  
“ rounded, by trials :

“ But preserve us from the Dominion of  
“ Satan! for Thine only, is the Sovereignty,  
“ the power, and the glory, throughout  
“ Eternity!!! Amen.”

This version will probably strike most people as a particularly prosaic and uninspired attempt at a rendering of the great original, but Blake saw in it something infinitely more pernicious.

In all sacred writings, “Bread” is symbolic of a spiritual state and to translate

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the "Bread" of the Prayer into the material bread which could be taxed, and bought with a price, was in Blake's view somewhat perilously near to blasphemy. It was, as Blake put it, saying the Prayer "backwards which, they say, raises the devil." \*

In this Blake was at one with Nicholas Breakspeare, the first and last Englishman who became Pope. And a very good Pope too was Adrian IV, whose pontificate covered part of the reign of our Henry II. He also made a translation of the Prayer, a metrical one, which will be given in full in the next chapter, and from this version I will now quote the clause relating to "Bread." "Give us this day our daily bread," becomes :

"Thou give to ous this ilke day  
" *That holy Bread which lasteth ay.*"

---

\* Reading material bread into this clause and praying for it is falling before the First Temptation. The Saviour was invited to use His Spiritual Power for a selfish end—the satisfaction of bodily hunger—and He instantly referred the Tempter to the Spiritual source and sustenance of all Life.

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Dr. Thornton would find himself supported in his material view of the Prayer by the four-year old child of whom Hans Andersen writes in his Tale, "What the Moon Saw." On this occasion the Moon saw a little girl saying her prayers in her crib whilst her mother sat beside her. In repeating the Prayer aloud, the child always added under her breath something on her own account. Questioned by her mother what it was she added after the words, "Give us this day our daily bread," the child replied, "don't be angry mother—I only said, *and please put plenty of butter on it.*" This the Moon saw, and the Moon might have seen Dr. Thornton's mind working in the same direction when he "said *his* prayers."

And Dr. Thornton would also find support among the Jews. One of their writers (*Jewish Chronicle*, March 12, 1926) has expressed the Jewish view of the Prayer, which he regards as "a composition (!) lacking in virility, backboneless and de-



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pendent when compared with the more robust and vigorous style of Jewish productions of the kind." Doubtless the writer is thinking of *Kol Nidvi* and other Talmudic treasures. It is particularly in the Bread clause that he touches Dr. Thornton. "*Give us this day our daily bread,*" he says, "is in accord with the whole of the teaching which Jesus impressed upon his followers—that their daily wants would be supplied them, and that they need not work and toil for their needs. He, in fact, debases Labour and does not, as does Judaism, dignify it for its own inherent value. True Judaism would have said: '*Give us power and energy to earn our daily bread*'."

There is no possibility of mistaking the materialistic mentality of Judaism revealed in this passage, with an absolute lack of craving for spiritual food in its soul. "That holy Bread which lasteth ay" of Adrian IV's version has no attraction for the Jews. It is really for the money to buy food that he is asking, and those who are well enough

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

off to buy bread without working for it have no need, according to Jewry, to say this prayer at all!

This is how Blake interpreted the inner meaning of Dr. Thornton's translation of the clause; in effect it was asking for

Lawful Bread, bought with Lawful Money, and a Lawful Heaven, seen thro' a Lawful Telescope, by means of a Lawful Window Light! The Holy Ghost and whatever cannot be taxed is Unlawful and Witchcraft.

[ I may here by way of parenthesis cite a passage from Jacob Boehme which bears on Dr. Thornton's "Highest Heavens" which Blake calls "Telescopic" :

Before I knew that which I deeply know now, I, like others, thought that there was no other true heaven than that which as a blue circle encloses the world high above the stars, thinking that God had a separate existence therein and that He was ruling this world by means of His Holy Spirit. (p. 59).]

I would warn readers that the very last thing for them to do in order to understand

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Blake's vision is to *try* to understand it. The faculty which has any need to make an effort is incapable of achieving this end. It is like Dr. Thornton looking for his heaven with a telescope. To one who has the true inner vision neither telescope, nor microscope, nor reasoning intellect is necessary. As Blake put it :

He who does not Know Truth at Sight is  
unworthy of Her Notice.

Speaking of his early youth Blake thus describes *his* heaven :

Inspiration and Vision was then, and now is,  
and I hope will always remain, my Element,  
my Eternal Dwelling place.

Two further extracts from Boehme writings may help to clear our ideas of what "heaven" is in the mystic vision :

(1). He is called our Father in heaven ; not as if heaven contained Him—for He is greater than All—but for the purpose of indicating that the glory and power of the Father appears pure, clear and radiant in the celestial kingdom wherein the Holy Trinity is triumphantly manifest. (*Aurora*, iii., p. 2.)

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(2). A man's heaven exists for him not outside of himself. If heaven is in him, then will he be in heaven, wherever he may be. Heaven is throughout the whole world and outside of it ; everywhere without any separate locality or place ; existing only within itself through the power of divine (interior) revelation. It is nothing but a manifestation of the Eternal One. (*Supersensual Life*, 42.)

We will now take Blake's version of what he termed Dr. Thornton's "Tory Translation" of the Prayer, re-translated "out of its disguise in the Classical and Scottish language into the vulgar English." According to Blake it amounted to this :

Our father Augustus Cæsar, who art in these thy Substantial Telescopic Heavens. Holiness to Thy Name or Title, & reverence to Thy Shadow. Thy Kingship come upon Earth first & then in Heaven. Give us day by day our Real Taxed Substantial Money bought Bread [*take . . . del.*]; deliver from the Holy Ghost [*words illegible . . . debt that was owing to him del.*] whatever cannot be Taxed; for all is debts & Taxes between Cæsar & us & one another; lead us not to read the Bible, but let our Bible be Virgil & Shakespeare, & deliver us from Poverty in Jesus, that Evil One. For thine is the Kingship, [or] Allegoric Godship, & the Power or War, & the Glory, or Law, Ages after Ages in thy descendants; for God is only an Allegory of Kings & nothing else. Amen.

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That Dr. Thornton's conception of the deity was that of an extra-cosmic Power, and not the spiritual source of all life is seen from the following quotation :

“What is the Will of God we are ordered to obey? . . . Let us consider whose Will it is. . . . It is the Will of our Maker. . . . It is finally the Will of Him, who is uncontrollably powerful.”

On which Blake comments :

So you See that God is just such a Tyrant as Augustus Cæsar ; and is not this Good and Learned and Wise and Classical ?

Thornton wrote :

“Dim at best are the conceptions we have of the Supreme Being, who, as it were, keeps the human race in suspense, neither discovering nor hiding himself.”

On which Blake exclaims :

**A Female God !**

Lest any should misunderstand him, Blake pencilled his own version of the Prayer. It meant this to him :

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER.

Jesus, our Father, who art in Thy heaven called by Thy Name the Holy Ghost. Thy Kingdom on Earth is Not, nor Thy Will done, but Satan's who is God of this World (the Accuser. Let his judgment be Forgiveness that he may be consumed on his own Throne).

Give us this Eternal Day our own right Bread. Take away Money or a Price or Debtor Tax.

Leave us not in Parsimony, Satan's Kingdom; liberate us from the Natural Man of Satan's Kingdom.

For Thine is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory and not Cæsar's or Satan's.

On the page opposite to this Blake wrote another version of the "Bread" clause:

Give us the Bread that is our due and Right by taking away Money or a Price or Tax upon what is Common to all in Thy Kingdom . . . everything has as much right to Eternal life as God, who is the Servant of Man. His judgment shall be forgiveness that he may be consumed on his own Throne.

There is nothing which man can rightly ask for which is not "common to all," and which is not beyond any "price" which man can pay. In the Prayer of the Gospels no exclusively, personal favour is desired.

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It will be seen that in the reading of the Prayer everything depends on the conception of what Man is, and what God is. The Jew's God, with his accusation of sins and his codes of law, is identical with Blake's Urizen—"You Reason," or "Your Reason," — who claimed for himself a separate self-hood and sought to impose the limits of the Reason of the self-hood on the Infinite. Reason is the Servant of Man and not his master. It is Man's part to return Reason to its proper station as the Servant of Inspiration. This is the work of Jesus, the Divine Image, who thus appeared to Blake's vision :

### THE DIVINE IMAGE.

To Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
All pray in their distress;  
And to these virtues of delight  
Return their thankfulness.

For Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is God our Father dear,  
And Mercy, Pity, Peace and Love  
Is Man, his child and care.

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For Mercy has a human heart,  
Pity a human face,  
And Love, the human form divine,  
And Peace the human dress.

Then every man, of every clime,  
That prays in his distress,  
Prays to the human form divine,  
Love, Mercy, Pity, Peace.

And all must love the human form,  
In heathen, turk or jew ;  
Where Mercy, Love and Pity dwell  
There God is dwelling too.

But Blake had a vision of another divinity which must be given also. This is not "*The Divine Image*," but "*A Divine Image*." This is additional to the "*Songs of Experience*," the former belonging to the period of Innocence before the "Fall."

### A DIVINE IMAGE.

Cruelty has a Human Heart,  
And Jealousy a Human Face,  
Terror the Human Form Divine,  
And Secrecy the Human Dress.

The Human Dress is Forged Iron  
The Human Form a fiery Forge,  
The Human Face a Furnace Seal'd  
The Human Heart its hungry gorge.



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It is not difficult to recognise in the divinity of this vision the "God of this World" or the Jews' God of Accusation, Jealousy and Vengeance, whom Blake saw worshipped under the "Names Divine of Jesus and Jehovah" by the classical learned of his day.

But even this divinity, this "mistaken Demon of Heaven," is still part of Universal Man, and is to be redeemed by the Power of Forgiveness, the religion of Jesus, and as soon as the Demon issues this fiat he is "consumed on his own Throne." Then "Jesus becomes Jehovah."

In the poem, "The Ghost of Abel," Satan demands of Jehovah—"Thou shalt Thyself be Sacrificed to Me, thy God, on Calvary."

To which the answer came, with thunder :

<i>Jehovah.</i>	Such is My Will	<i>Thunders.</i>
	that Thou Thyself go to Eternal Death	
In Self Annihilation, even till Satan, Self-subdu'd,		
Put off Satan		
Into the Bottomless Abyss, whose torment arises for		
ever & ever.		

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It will make this more clear if I quote from the lyric at the opening of the second Chapter of the *Jerusalem*. "Albion" is Humanity as a whole in its aspect as fallen into Experience,\* and the "Spectre" is the "Reasoning Power in Man."

Albion's Spectre from his loins  
Tore forth in all the pomp of War :  
Satan his name : in flames of fire  
He stretch'd his Druid Pillars far.

\* \* \* \*

He wither'd up the Human Form  
By laws of sacrifice for sin,  
Till it became a Mortal Worm,  
But O ! translucent all within.

The Divine Vision still was seen,  
Still was the Human Form Divine,  
Weeping in weak and mortal clay,  
O Jesus, still the Form was thine.

---

\* "Not patriotism alone caused Blake to choose the name of the ancient Giant as the name of the Eternal Man, for both Geography and the traditional history of Albion, or England, were unusually felicitous as symbols. Man, like England, is a little island entirely surrounded by the Sea of Time and Space. It was originally inhabited by Giants (natural forces), which were subdued by a noble, the Trojan Brutus, who was exiled from a finer land (symbolically from Eternity). But Albion's ocean wall did not prove a definite barrier : it sent its ships across the Sea of Time and Space, just as the Poet is the Explorer of Eternity." (*Poster Damon*, p. 144.)

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And thine the Human Face, & thine  
The Human Hands & Feet & Breath,  
Entering thro' the Gates of Birth  
And passing thro' the Gates of Death.

And O thou Lamb of God, whom I  
Slew in my dark self-righteous pride,  
Art thou returned to Albion's Land?  
And is Jerusalem thy Bride?

Come to my arms & never more  
Depart, but dwell for ever here :  
Create my Spirit to thy Love :  
Subdue my Spectre to thy Fear.

Spectre of Albion ! Warlike Fiend !  
In clouds of blood & ruin roll'd,  
I here reclaim thee for my own,  
My Self-hood ! Satan arm'd in Gold."

In Blake's cosmogony there was nothing separate from Humanity, and Satan no less than the Divine Image was part of his own organism. This self-hood must be "consumed on its own Throne" by the fiat of Forgiveness of Sins, and denial of the separate self and then all is well. This is the consummation of all Blake's epics.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

There is another quotation which must be made here from the final Chapter of *Jerusalem*, plate 96 :

Then Jesus appeared standing by Albion as the  
Good Shepherd  
By the lost Sheep that he hath found, &  
Albion knew that it  
Was the Lord, the Universal Humanity; &  
Albion saw his Form  
A Man, and they conversed as Man with Man in  
Ages of Eternity.  
And the Divine Appearance was the likeness and  
similitude of Los.

Albion said : "O, Lord, what can I do? my self-  
hood cruel  
" Marches against thee, deceitful, from Sinai & from  
Edom  
" Into the Wilderness of Judah, to meet thee in his  
pride.  
" I behold the Visions of my deadly Sleep of Six  
Thousand years  
" Dazzling around thy skirts like a Serpent of precious  
stones & gold  
" I know it is my Self, O my Divine Creator &  
Redeemer."

## DR. THORNTON'S TRANSLATION

Jesus replied : " Fear not, Albion ; unless I die  
thou canst not live ;

" But if I die I shall arise again & thou with me.

" This is Friendship & Brotherhood : without it  
Man Is Not."

So Jesus spoke : the Covering Cherub coming on  
in darkness

Overshadowed them, & Jesus said : " Thus do Men  
in Eternity

" One for another to put off, by forgiveness, every  
sin."

Albion replied : " Cannot Man exist without  
Mysterious

" Offering of Self for Another ? is this Friendship &  
Brotherhood ?

" I see thee in the likeness & similitude of Los my  
Friend."

Jesus said : " Wouldest thou love one who never  
died

" For thee, or ever die for one who had not died for  
thee ?

" And if God dieth not for Man & giveth not himself

" Eternally for Man, Man could not exist ; for Man  
is Love

" As God is Love : every kindness to another is a  
little death

" In the Divine Image, nor can Man exist but by  
Brotherhood."

## CHAPTER X.

### THE PRAYER ITSELF IN SEVERAL TONGUES

**I**T will be convenient now to reproduce the Prayer in its original form in the Greek and Latin Testaments, and in several other languages, so that it may be seen how these have interpreted its meaning. And first we will take it in the Greek of St. Matthew's Gospel, beginning Chapter VI, verse 9.

## THE PRAYER ITSELF

### I

#### FROM THE GREEK TESTAMENT :

Πάτερ ἡμῶν ὁ ἐν τοῖς οὐρανῶις,  
ἀγιασθήτω τὸ ὄνομά σου,  
ἐλθέτω ἡ βασιλεία σου,  
γενηθήτω τὸ θελημά σου,  
ὡς ἐν οὐρανῶ καὶ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς·  
τὸν ἄρτον ἡμῶν τὸν ἐπιούσιον δὸς ἡμῖν σήμερον  
καὶ ἄφες ἡμῖν τα ὀφειλήματα ἡμῶν,  
ὡς καὶ ἡμεῖς ἀφίεμεν τοῖς ὀφειλέταις ἡμῶν·  
καὶ μὴ εἰσενέγκῃς ἡμᾶς εἰς πειρασμόν,  
ἀλλὰ ῥῦσαι ἡμᾶς ἀπὸ τοῦ πονηροῦ  
ὅτι σου ἐστὶν ἡ βασιλεία, καὶ ἡ δύναμις, καὶ ἡ  
δόξα, εἰς τοὺς αἰῶνας ἀμήν.

# BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

## II

FROM THE VULGATE EDITION OF SIXTUS V  
AND CLEMENT VIII:

Pater noster, qui es in cœlis :

Sanctificetur nomen tuum.

Adveniat regnum tuum.

Fiat voluntas tua, sicut in cœlo et in  
terra.

Panem nostrum supersubstantialem da  
nobis hodie.

Et dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut et  
nos dimittimus debitoribus nostris.

Et ne nos inducas in tentationem.

Sed libera nos a malo. Amen.



## THE PRAYER ITSELF

### III

#### THE FRENCH VERSION :

Notre Père qui es aux cieux,  
Ton nom soit sanctifié ;  
Ton règne vienne ;  
Ta volonté soit faite sur la terre comme  
au ciel ;

Donne-nous aujourd'hui notre pain  
quotidien ;

Pardonne-nous nos péchés, comme nous  
les pardonnons à ceux qui nous ont  
offensés ;

Et ne nous induis point en tentation ;

Mais délivre-nous du mal ;

Car c'est à toi qu'appartient la règne,  
la puissance, et la gloire. Amen.

# BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

## IV

### THE GERMAN VERSION :

Unser Vater in dem Himmel!  
Dein Name werde geheiligt.  
Dein Reich komme.

Dein Wille geschehe auf Erden, wie im  
Himmel.

Unser tägliches Brod gieb uns heute.

Und vergieb uns unsere Schulden, wie  
wir unsern Schuldigern vergeben.

Und führe uns nicht in versuchung,  
sondern erlöse uns von dem Übel.

Denn dein ist das Reich, und die Kraft,  
und die Herrlichkeit in Ewigkeit. Amen.

# THE PRAYER ITSELF

## V

### ENGLISH VERSIONS

#### (1)

THE LORD'S PRAYER TRANSLATED BY POPE  
ADRIAN IV:

(Copied from "A. Tarleton on Nicholas  
Breakspear," p. 254.)

#### *Paternoster in Anglico*

Vre Fadir in heuene riche  
Thi name be halied everliche,  
Thou bring us to thi michilblische,  
Thi will to wirche thee ve wisse,  
Als hit is in heuene ido,  
Euer in earth ben hit also,  
That holi bred that lasteth ay,  
Thou send hit ous this ilke day,  
Forgiue ous all that we hauith don,  
Als we forgiuet vch other mon.  
He let us falle in no founding,  
Ak scilde us fro the foule thing. Amen.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

(2)

FROM THE REVISED VERSION,  
ST. MATTHEW VI, 9 *et seq.*

Our Father which art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come.

Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on  
earth.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our debts, as we also have  
forgiven our debtors.

And bring us not into temptation, but  
deliver us from the evil *one*.

(For Thine is the Kingdom, and the  
power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.)

## THE PRAYER ITSELF

(3)

THE VERSION FROM ST. LUKE, XI, 2 :

( Marginal additions being added in brackets.)

Our Father (which art in heaven)

Hallowed be Thy name.

Thy Kingdom come.

(Thy will be done, as in heaven, so on earth.)

Give us day by day our daily bread.

And forgive us our sins ; for we ourselves also forgive every one that is indebted to us.

And bring us not into temptation ;

(But deliver us from the evil one.)

## CHAPTER XI.

### A PARAPHRASE

Such are the versions of the prayer as expressed in different tongues and by different writers. In F. Hartmann's "*Jehoshua, the Prophet of Nazareth*," there is a paraphrase of it in a *positive* aspect which throws light on it from another point. In place of "*Hallowed be Thy Name*" we have "*Let us glorify*" Thy Name, and so throughout the prayer. This paraphrase, which shall be given presently with some modifications, brings out the purely spiritual nature of the prayer, and confirms Blake's interpretation of prayer in general when he says :

I should suspect that I worshipped the devil  
If I thanked my God for worldly things.

## A PARAPHRASE

And in the "Everlasting Gospel" he says "I never will pray for the world." Thus in the Lord's Prayer, it is the spiritual aspect of man which is the object of petition all through, and when we have prayed to the Father of us all that *His* name may be *hallowed*, this clause of the petition includes implicitly all the rest.

In the first three clauses of the Prayer in all the versions, the position of "Thy" gives it tremendous emphasis. It is "*Thy* Name," "*Thy* Kingdom" and "*Thy* Will." This almost inevitably suggests an anti-thesis—*not* some other kingdom, *not* some other will, etc. This Blake makes clear in his version: "Thy Kingdom on Earth is Not, nor Thy Will done, *but Satan's*"; and "For *Thine* is the Kingdom and the Power and the Glory and *not Cæsar's or Satan's.*"

The Hartmann Paraphrase in its original form uses the third person in referring to the Father—"Worship *Him*," "*His* Sphere," etc. I have thought it better to restore the original directness and use "Thy."

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Our Father which art in the heavens  
of all men.

Let us glorify Thee, the Universal Spirit  
of Divine Wisdom, from whose Light  
the consciousness of all beings  
originates.

Let us worship Thee by sacrificing to  
Thee all thoughts of self and all  
individual self-interests, and by rising  
up to Thy sphere in our thoughts  
and aspirations.

May no earthly wish ever cause us to  
act against the Universal Will of  
the Supreme, who rulest all things  
in the visible and invisible Universe  
by Thine unchangeable Law.

May Thy power cause all mankind to  
grow in daily Knowledge and to  
expand in Love, and may all men  
awaken to realise their true state as  
Spiritual Powers, temporarily con-  
nected with mortal forms.



## A PARAPHRASE

Let no thoughts of our past deeds,  
when we were in a state of darkness,  
mar our present state of supreme  
happiness, and may we forget all  
the evils that have ever been  
inflicted on us by others.

Let us strive to become free from all the  
attractions of matter and sensuality,  
and submerging our consciousness  
into that of the Universal and  
Supreme, become redeemed from the  
Illusion of Self, the source of all Evil.

For the mortal self of man is merely an  
unsubstantial Shadow, whilst the  
Real and Substantial is the Indi-  
visible, Eternal, and Infinite Spirit.

Contemplation of this paraphrase will  
reveal that all is implicit in the original  
Prayer, which, like all truly inspired  
writings, is infinite in meaning and bear-  
ings; and when the Saviour enjoined it  
upon His disciples, He had given them the  
entire scope of all prayer.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

There is a divine magic in the living words which all the centuries have borne witness to. The frequent repetition of the prayer in the Church Service is not a vain repetition, but the contrary.

If the paraphrase is committed to memory and repeated from the heart, clause by clause, after the original in our own or in any other language, it will be found to be a spiritual exercise which will clear the mind of the earthly clouds which are constantly obscuring its heaven.

It is worthy of note that in German the word for "prayer," *Gebet*, is identical with *geben*, "to give." Moreover the gesture of giving is identical with the gesture of receiving. Natural gesture is instinct; it is not education, and it is not convention. A person praying is actually *giving himself*—will, thought and word. This is self-surrender; it is not asking for any *thing*. Prayer is the sacrifice of the personal will, and Heaven is the celestial state of will—the inner spiritual world.

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

Blake's fundamental ideas of Life and Inspiration were put into tangible shape in his marginal comments on a criticism by Bishop Watson of a pamphlet by Blake's friend, Thomas Paine, the revolutionary. Blake was himself in revolt against the accepted ideas of his age, and one of his spiritual enemies was the prevalent Deism of that time. This was a rationalistic religion associated with the names of Voltaire and Rousseau, which taught that Natural Man was born good and that Natural Religion was inherent in him. To this Blake replied that man was born a "spectre" and that the whole

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

business of his life was to be continually transformed into his opposite. The "Natural Man" is a child of Nature like the animal world, but there is in Man a voice which is continually impelling him to act against his "natural" instincts and desires. This is the Holy Ghost in Man and the voice is heard in the conscience. The conscience is the "Word of God universal," as inspired writings are the "Peculiar Word of God." To "prophesy" is not to foretell future events on the temporal plane, but to "speak for God," to utter in Time the words of Eternity. All true poets, said Blake, speak by Inspiration. And, moreover, he held that all true action—which is art—begins from the inner plane, and in that way in Blake's vision "Christ and the Apostles were all Artists." They did not act from reason—the chief God of the deists—but from impulse—as they were inspired. In the same way, as he would have said, there is no word uttered and no deed done that is of any worth, which is

## HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE.

not the utterance of inspiration. "There is no God but that God who is the intellectual fountain of humanity." "The worship of God consists in honouring the greatest men best, each according to his genius, which is the Holy Ghost in Man."

But Blake was no bigot. For all his hatred of "deism," Thomas Paine was his friend, and when Paine was right in his attack on the historicity and literality of the Old Testament, and when a bishop took upon himself to defend both, Blake recognised that it was the so-called Atheist who was "inspired" and that the Bishop was anti-Christian in defending the indefensible.

In Blake's view the books of the Old Testament were not dictated by an extrinsic God to an external ear, but were inspired poems; the persons described were not especially favoured persons who could do deeds which the instinct of humanity cries out against as wrong, and yet be absolved from guilt because they were "told" to do them by this external god.

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

The common idea that the fount of "inspiration" dried up for the Jews with the Book of Zachariah, and for the Christians with the Book of Revelation, which is upheld by Bishop Watson, Blake regarded as nothing short of blasphemy: "There never was a time when an honest man could not speak with God." Remembering his dictum in his "All Religions are one," that "No man can speak from his heart and not intend truth" and his other saying "No truth can be stated *so as to be understood* and not be believed," we shall be in a position to follow the annotations Blake made to "An Apology for the Bible in a Series of Letters addressed to Thomas Paine by R. Watson, D.D., F.R.S., Bishop of Lichfield."

One passage should be noted. Blake is dealing with Watson's claim that the books of the Pentateuch were the authentic writings of the man, Moses. This Blake says no one can prove or disprove; but every man knows *the impression they make*

## HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

*on his own mind.* And this *impression* is the important thing. The deeds recorded are so recorded, not as examples to be approved or imitated, but as things to be abhorred.

I will now give Blake's annotations, without the passages commented upon, as they contain their own message. Keynes, from whom I quote, gives both. The first refers to the Bishop's endeavour to excuse the Bible for saying that the Israelites were ordered by God to exterminate the Canaanites. Paine had said that to believe the Bible to be truly historic we must "unbelieve all our belief in the Justice of God." To this the Bishop had replied that earthquakes did the same kind of thing.

[The quotations are taken from the 2nd volume of *The Writings of William Blake* by Geoffrey Keynes, and the numbers at the head of each are the numbers of the pages of that work on which they occur.]

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Blake writes :

152

The perversions of Christ's words and acts are attacked by Paine and also the perversions of the Bible. Who dare defend either the Acts of Christ or the Bible unperverted ?

But to him who sees this mortal pilgrimage in the light that I see it, duty to his country is the first consideration and safety the last.

Read patiently ; take not up this book in an idle hour ; the consideration of these things is the whole duty of man and the affairs of life and death trifles and sports of time. But these considerations are the business of Eternity.

Paine has not attacked Christianity. Watson has defended anti-Christ.

156

If conscience is not a Criterion of Moral Rectitude, what is it? He who thinks that Honesty is changeable knows nothing about it. . . . Virtue and honesty or the dictates of Conscience, are of no doubtful signification to anyone. Opinion is one Thing. Principle another. He who supposes that his principles are to be changed is a Dissembler, who Disguises his Principles and calls that change. . - . The Truth and certainty of Virtue and Honesty, *i.e.*, Inspiration, needs no one to prove it ; it is evident as the Sun and Moon . . .

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No man can do a Vicious action and think it to be Virtuous. No man can take darkness for light. To me, who believe the Bible and profess myself a Christian, a defender of the Wickedness of the Israelites in murdering so many thousands under pretence of a command from God is altogether abominable and blasphemous. Why did Christ come? Was it not to abolish the Jewish Imposture? Was not Christ martyr'd because he taught that God loved all men and was their Father and forbade all contentions for Worldly prosperity in opposition to the Jewish Scriptures, which are only an example of the wickedness and deceit of the Jews and were written as an example of the possibility of Human Beastliness, in all its branches.

158

Christ died as an Unbeliever and if the Bishop had his will so would Paine; but he who speaks a word against the Son of Man shall be forgiven. Let the Bishop prove that he has not spoken against the Holy Ghost, who in Paine strives with Christendom as in Christ he strove with the Jews.

159

Horrible! The Bishop is an inquisitor. God never makes one man murder another, nor one nation.

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There is a vast difference between an accident brought on by a man's own carelessness and a destruction from the designs of another. The earthquakes at Lisbon, etc., were the natural result of Sin, but the destruction of the Canaanites by Joshua was the Unnatural design of wicked men. To extirpate a nation by another is as wicked as to destroy an individual by means of another individual, which God considers (in the Bible) as murder and commands that it shall not be done.

160

That God does and always did converse with honest men, Paine never denies. He only denies that God conversed with Murderers and Revengers such as the Jews were, and of course he holds that the Jews conversed with their own State Religion which they called God and so were liars as Christ says. That the Jews assumed a right Exclusively to the benefits of God will be a lasting witness against them and the same will it be against Christians.

160

Read the Edda of Iceland, the Songs of Fingal, the accounts of North American Savages (as they are called). Likewise read Homer's Iliad. He was certainly a Savage in the Bishop's sense. He knew nothing of God in the Bishop's sense of the word and yet he was no fool.

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## HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

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The Bible or Peculiar Word of God, Exclusive of the Conscience or the Word of God Universal,\* is that abomination, which, like the Jewish ceremonies, is for ever removed, and henceforth every man may converse with God and be a King and Priest in his own house.

161

The Bible tells me that the plan of Providence was subverted at the Fall of Adam and that it was not restored till Christ.

161

It is strange that God should speak to men formerly and not now, because it is not true. †

162

He who writes things for true which none would write but the actor ( such are most of the acts of Moses )

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\* "Everything that happens takes place through the will of the Supreme. Conscience is the state which we have received from God in which we should see our own image, and according to the dictates of which we should act, without attempting to discover reasons in the guidance of our life in regard to morals and virtues. We should do that which our conscience teaches for no other reason than because our conscience teaches it. To learn from others, to accept the opinion of others, to act in a certain manner because others are acting in that way, is temptation."

*Paracelsus*, p.12.

† Watson had said that it was "strange" that God made an immediate manifestation of Himself in the first ages and not since.

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must either be the actor or a fable writer or a liar. If Moses did not write the history of his acts, it takes away the authority altogether; it ceases to be history and becomes a Poem of probable impossibilities, fabricated for pleasure, as moderns say, but I say by Inspiration.

163

Jesus could not do miracles where unbelief hindered, hence we must conclude that the man who holds miracles to have ceased puts it out of his own power to ever witness one. The manner of a miracle being performed is in modern times considered as an arbitrary command of the agent upon the patient, but this is an impossibility, and not a miracle, neither did Jesus ever do such a miracle. Is it a greater miracle to feed five thousand men with five loaves than to overthrow all the armies of Europe with a small pamphlet? Look over the events of your own life and if you do not find that you have both done such miracles and lived by such you do not see as I do. True, I cannot do a miracle to experiment and domineer over and prove to others my superior power as neither could Christ. But I can and do work such as both astonish and comfort me and mine. How can Paine, the worker of miracles, ever doubt Christ's in the above sense of the word Miracle? But how can Watson ever believe the above sense of the word Miracle, who considers it as an arbitrary act of the

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## HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

agent upon an unbelieving patient, whereas the Gospel says that Christ could not do a miracle because of Unbelief?

If Christ could not do miracles because of Unbelief, the reason alleged by Priests for miracles is false ; for those who believe want not to be confounded by miracles. Christ and His Prophets and Apostles were not ambitious miracle mongers. \*

164

Prophets in the modern sense of the word have never existed. Jonah was no prophet in the modern sense, for his prophesy of Nineveh failed. Every honest man is a prophet, he utters his opinion both of private and public matters. Thus : If you go on So, the result is So. He never says, such a thing will happen let you do what you will. A Prophet is a Seer, not an Arbitrary Dictator. It is man's fault if God is not able to do him good, for he gives to the just & the unjust, but the unjust reject his gift.

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\* A curious example of the belief that Christ was a "Miracle Monger" is to be found in Disraeli's novel, *Tancred*. Tancred was a Christian ; and the heroine of the story, "The Rose of Sharon," a Jewess, with whom he was in love, remarked to Tancred that his Saviour was "*so fond of performing miracles.*" This is the Jewish conception, and the "Christian" hero created in the Jewish brain saw nothing to resent in the suggestion !

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Nothing can be more contemptible than to suppose Public RECORDS to be True. Of what consequence is it whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or no? If Paine trifles with some of his objections, it is folly to confute him seriously in these and leave his more material ones unanswered. Public Records! as if Public Records were True! Impossible; for the facts are such as none but the actor could tell. If it is True, Moses and none but he could write it, unless we allow it to be Poetry and that poetry inspired.

If historical facts can be written by inspiration, Milton's Paradise Lost is as true as Genesis or Exodus; but the Evidence is nothing, for how can he who writes what he has neither seen nor heard of be an Evidence of The Truth of his history?

166

I cannot conceive the Divinity of the books in the Bible to consist either in who they were written by, or at what time, or in the historical evidence which may be all false in the eyes of one man and true in the eyes of another, but in the sentiments and examples, which, whether true or Parabolic, are Equally useful as Examples given to us of the perverseness of some and its consequent evil and the honesty of others and its consequent good. This sense of the Bible is equally true to all and

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## HISTORICITY OF THE BIBLE

equally plain to all. None can doubt the impression which he receives from a book of Examples. If he is good he will abhor wickedness in David or Abraham; if he is wicked he will make their wickedness an excuse for his and so he would do by any other book.

All Penal Laws court Transgression and therefore are cruelty and Murder. The laws of the Jews were (both ceremonial and real) the basest and most oppressive of human codes, and being like all other codes given under pretence of divine command, were what Christ pronounced them, The Abomination that maketh Desolate, *i.e.* State Religion, which is the source of all cruelty.

169

The Gospel is Forgiveness of Sins and has no Moral Precepts. These belong to Plato and Seneca and Nero.

169

Christ came not to call the Virtuous.

Who does the Bishop call Bad Men? Are they the Publicans and Sinners that Christ loved to associate with? Does God love the Righteous according to the Gospel, or does He not cast them off?

170

For who is really Righteous? It is all Pretention.

It appears to me now that Tom Paine is a better Christian than the Bishop.

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## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

I have read this book with attention and find that the Bishop has only hurt Paine's heel while Paine has broken his head. The Bishop has not answered one of Paine's grand objections.

A passage from Blake's "Descriptive Catalogue" may be cited here as showing that he did not regard the Hebrew Scriptures as different in origin and essence from the Scriptures of other nations :

The antiquities of every Nation under Heaven, is no less sacred than that of the Jews. They are the same thing, as Jacob Bryant and all antiquarians have proved. How other antiquities came to be neglected and disbelieved, while those of the Jews are collected and arranged, is an enquiry worthy both of the Antiquarian and the Divine.

This Chapter may fitly close with a quotation from Paine's book, *The Age of Reason*. It throws light on Blake's use of the word "Prophecy" as a description of some of his poems :

"There is not throughout the whole book called the Bible any word that denotes to us what we call a poet, nor any



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word that describes what we call poetry. The case is that the word *prophet*, to which later times affixed a new idea, was the Bible word for *poet*, and the art of *prophesying* meant the art of making poetry. It also meant the art of playing poetry to a tune on any instrument of music." (Thomas Paine, *The Age of Reason*, Ch. VII.)

## CHAPTER XIII.

### *UNBERUFEN*

**T**H**ERE** are two things in life which no man ought ever to do: the one is to congratulate himself, and the other is to pity himself. The spiritual instinct of man is telling us this all day long. That is the meaning of the superstition (as it is called) of "touching wood" after every self-congratulatory exclamation; or the immediate taking of it back with the phrase "Be it un-spoken." There is no superstition in the matter at all, but a fact of solid importance. It is again a question of the illusory personal Shadow and the spiritual substantiality. When a man has congratulated himself on any per-

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formance of his own, or on any acquisition that he has made, he has, in so doing, planted it on the Shadow, which has no basis on which it can stand. In this way *he has spent his advantage*. When a man pities himself for his suffering, or his misfortunes, he has, again, transferred to his unsubstantial Shadow all that his experience had in it to teach him, and thus *he has squandered the Bread of Experience which is the food of the soul*. "Every misfortune" says Paracelsus, "is a fortune," but self-pity only perpetuates the miserable side of it, and effectually prevents a man from reaping the fruits which it conceals.\*

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\* "God loves all mankind alike; but not all men love God with the same kind of love. Each of God's children has the same inheritance; but one squanders while another preserves it. That which God has made equal is made unequal by the actions of men. Each man taking his cross upon himself finds therein his reward. Every misfortune is a fortune, because divine goodness gives to everyone that which he most needs for his future development; the suffering begins only when discontent, the result of the non-recognition of eternal law, steps in. The greater the obstacle to combat the greater will be the victory."

Paracelsus, *Philosophia V.*

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

The nearest approach to self-congratulation which anyone may safely indulge in, when apparent fortune smiles upon him, is to adopt the biblical attitude and "rejoice with fear and trembling."

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Boehme's motto is another way of putting the same truth :

" He to whom sorrow is the same as joy,  
" And joy the same as sorrow,  
" May thank God for his equanimity."

Boehme's contemporary, Shakespeare, drew his inspiration from the same fount. He made Hamlet say to Horatio :

" For thou has been  
" As one, in suffering all, that suffers nothing ;  
" A man that fortune's buffets and rewards  
" Has ta'en with equal thanks."

And milleniums before these Seers the author of *Bhagavat Gita* had seen the same vision and had said the same thing :

( Krishna is addressing Arguna—)

" Making equal good and ill fortune, gain and loss, victory and defeat, gird thyself for the fight, for thus thou shalt not fall into sin !"

" Thy right is to the work, but never to its fruits ; let not the fruit of thy work be thy motive, nor take refuge in abstinence from work."

" Standing in union with the Soul, carry out thy work, putting away attachment, O conquerer of wealth ; equal in success and failure, for equalness [ Boehme's " equanimity" ] " is called union with the Soul." ( Book II, 38, 47, 48 ).

And this :

" Let him not exult when he meets happiness, let him not grieve when he meets sorrow ; firm in Soul-Vision, undeluded, knowing the Eternal, he stands firm in the Eternal." ( Book V, 20 ).

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The well-known occurrence of persons experiencing some illness or other mishap almost immediately after having told someone that they had been free from it for ever so long, can be easily explained by those who have vision enough to trace the occult connection. The more developed in spirituality the person who makes the boast, the more immediate the repercussion. And here again, if he does not waste the experience, the misfortune is immediately transmuted into fortune and restores him to his proper polarity. Blake saw all this clearly enough as may be perceived from his verse :

Since all the Riches of this world  
May be gifts from the Devil & Earthly Kings  
I should think that I worship'd the Devil  
IF I THANK'D MY GOD FOR WORLDLY THINGS.

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Blake has himself put the same truth into verse in his "Auguries of Innocence" :

Man was made for Joy and Woe ;  
And when this we rightly know  
Thro' the World we safely go.  
Joy and Woe are woven fine  
A Clothing for the Soul divine ;  
Under every grief and pine  
Runs a joy with silken twine.

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It is with nations and races as it is with individuals. Such a combination of self-congratulation and self-pity is nowhere so signally exemplified as it is with the Tribe of the Jews. They are continually pluming themselves on their "religion" of which they tell us they are very proud—a curious combination!—and boasting of their "spirituality." Now boasting is only possible to the Shadow-self, and true spirituality consists entirely in the sacrifice of this very "self" and the denial of its reality. Therefore if anyone *boasts* of his "spirituality," we know that he cannot possibly possess any.

When the Jew experiences the consequences of his selfish principles in the natural reaction which their operation produces on his neighbours, he fills the world with his cries of self-pity and demands for revenge. How unutterably cruel self-pity can be has been fully revealed in our own time. The complete story of the Jewish hegemony in Russia can never be told, but enough is known to understand

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the full meaning of the Jewish excuse put forward for all the murders and atrocities committed on Russians by the usurping Jews. The Jewish papers said of the Jew, Leon Braunstein, *alias* Trotsky, when he was in his full career of exterminating all that was best and noblest in Christian Russia, that he was “*unconsciously revenging the wrongs of his race for centuries past!*”

The belief that the Shadow consciousness, the temporal, personal ego, can be “righteous” is in Blake’s vision the only sin. It brings a man into the “Wilderness of Moral Law,” and the belief that Righteousness instead of Forgiveness, is the end and aim of mortal man. This leads inevitably to a pharisaic religion of self-righteousness, and to all sorts of hypocritical devices for making men and things appear to be that which they are not.

All the sufferings and all the quarrels of humanity can be traced to this initial lie. The acquirement of self-knowledge is a life-long process, and, except in the case of

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the most experienced of the souls born into this world, is only attained by slow degrees. It follows that since so few of us really know our own selves there is little wonder that we are constantly making mistakes about our friends and relations. We expect others to be that which our apprehension makes them, and when they fail to come up to the artificial standard which we have created for them we resent the failure as a personal injury to ourselves! Whereas the fault is entirely in our own vision. They never were and never professed themselves to be that which we had wrongly pictured them. The present chaotic state of all the countries of the world is traceable to this hypocritical habit of taking the conventional aspect of things as being the true one. Thus it comes about that we can only exclaim with Blake:

The Visions of Eternity, by reason of narrowed  
perceptions,  
Are become weak Visions of Time & Space,  
fixed into furrows of Death,  
Till deep dissimulation is the only defence an  
honest man has left. (*Jerusalem*, 49.)



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This "dissimulation" is rendered necessary for intercourse with the blind believers in the events of Time. Those who have Vision enough to distinguish between convention and reality will be able to find in the denial of the eternity of the Shadow, in the sacrifice of the temporal ego and all its loves and longings, the pathway to the Knowledge of the Ego which owes nothing to Time.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### WISDOM AND VISION

IN Alexander Gilchrist's *The Life of William Blake*, in the chapter describing his "Youthful Disciples," an incident is recorded of a visit paid to the Blakes by the portrait painter, George Richmond:

"As a lad of sixteen he met Blake one day at the elder Tatham's and was allowed to walk home with him. To the boy it was 'as if he were walking with the prophet Isaiah,' for he had heard much of Blake, greatly admired all he had heard, and all he had seen of his designs. The prophet talked fully and kindly, freely opening his mind, as was his wont with the young—with men of eighteen or twenty say—even more freely and favourably, perhaps, than with their elders. There was more community of sentiment—a bond of sympathy. He was not provoked

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by them to utter extravagances and extreme opinions. On this occasion he talked of his own youth and of his visions. Just as Mr. Palmer speaks of Blake's tolerant kindness towards young men, Mr. Richmond relates that, in their intercourse, he would himself, as young men are prone to do, boldly argue and disagree, as though they were equal in years and wisdom, and Blake would take it all good-humouredly. 'Never,' adds Mr. Richmond, 'have I known an artist so spiritual, so devoted, so simple-minded, or cherishing imagination as he did.' Once, the young artist, finding his invention flag during a whole fortnight, went to Blake, as was his wont, for some advice or comfort. He found him sitting at tea with his wife. He related his distress; how he felt deserted by the power of invention. To his astonishment Blake turned to his wife suddenly and said: 'It is just so with us, is it not, when the visions forsake us? What do we do then, Kate?' 'We kneel down and pray, Mr. Blake.'"

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Truly the Power to *SEE* that which *IS* through the obscurity of all that *SEEMS*, is the Daily Bread of Eternity for which Man must pray. Because—

. . . . What seems to Be, Is, To those to whom  
It seems to Be, & is productive of the most dreadful  
Consequences to those to whom it seems to Be . . . .  
(*Jerusalem*, 36: 50-53.)

*A Vision of the Last Judgment* is one of the greatest of Blake's designs, and his own description of the picture contains some of the profoundest expressions of his Spiritual Wisdom. "The Last Judgment" is an experience that happens to every person whenever Error is cast out and Truth embraced. The Description of the *Vision* is among the Blake M.S. acquired by D. G. Rossetti, and is published in full by Keynes, from whom I take the following extracts, and whose arrangement I follow. The number of the pages at the end of each extract refers to the pages in the original M.S.

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Of the great picture itself there are numerous reproductions, and these are to be found in most of the recent illustrated books on Blake's works, and, of course, very beautifully produced in Keynes'.

Here are the extracts :

The Last Judgment [will be] when all those are Cast away who trouble Religion with Questioning concerning Good & Evil or Eating of the Tree of those Knowledges or Reasonings which hinder the Vision of God, turning all into a Consuming Fire. When Imagination, Art & Science & all Intellectual Gifts, all the Gifts of the Holy Ghost, are look'd upon as of no use and only Contention remains to Man, then the Last Judgment begins, and its Vision is seen by the Imaginative Eye of Every one according to the situation he holds. ( p. 70.)

The Last Judgment is not Fable or Allegory, but Vision. Fable or Allegory are a totally distinct and inferior kind of Poetry. Vision or Imagination is a Representation of what Eternally Exists; Really and Unchangeably. Fable or Allegory is Form'd by the daughters of Memory. Imagination is surrounded by the daughters of Inspiration, who in the aggregate are call'd Jerusalem. Fable is Allegory, but what critics call The Fable, is Vision itself. The Hebrew Bible and the Gospel of Jesus

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are not Allegory, but Eternal Vision or Imagination of All that Exists. Note here that Fable or Allegory is seldom without some Vision. Pilgrim's Progress is full of it, the Greek Poets the same; but Allegory and Vision ought to be known as Two Distinct Things, and so called for the Sake of Eternal Life. (p. 68.)

The Last Judgment is one of these Stupendous Visions. I have represented it as I saw it; to different People it appears differently as everything else does; for tho' on Earth things seem Permanent, they are less permanent than a Shadow, as we know too well.

The Nature of Visionary Fancy, or Imagination, is very little known, & the Eternal nature & permanence of its ever Existent Images is consider'd as less permanent than the things of Vegetative and Generative Nature; yet the Oak dies as well as the Lettuce, but its Eternal Image and Individuality never dies, but renews by its seed, just as the Imaginative Image returns by the seed of Contemplative Thought; the Writings of the Prophets illustrate these conceptions of the Visionary Fancy by their various sublime or Divine Images as seen in the Worlds of Vision. (pp. 68, 69.)

The Nature of my Work is Visionary or Imaginative; it is an endeavour to Restore what the Ancients called the Golden Age (p. 72.)

## WISDOM AND VISION

No man of Sense ever supposes that Copying from Nature is the Art of Painting ; if Art is no more than this, it is no better than any other Manual Labour ; anybody may do it & the fool often will do it best as it is a work of no Mind. ( p. 76.)

The world of Imagination is the world of Eternity ; it is the divine bosom into which we shall all go after the death of the Vegetated body. This World of Imagination is Infinite and Eternal, whereas the World of Generation, or Vegetation is Finite & Temporal. There Exist in that Eternal World the Permanent Realities of Every Thing which we see reflected in the Vegetable Glass of Nature. All Things are comprehended in these Eternal Forms in the divine body of the Saviour, the True Vine of Eternity, the Human Imagination, who appear'd to Me as Coming to Judgment among his Saints & throwing off the Temporal that the Eternal might be Establish'd ; around him were seen the Images of Existences according to a certain order suited to my Imaginative Eye. ( pp. 69, 70.)

In Eternity one Thing never changes into another Thing. Each Identity is Eternal ; consequently Apuleius's Golden Ass & Ovid's Metamorphosis & others of the like kind are Fable ; yet they contain

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Vision in a sublime degree, being derived from real Vision in more ancient writings. Lot's Wife being Changed into a Pillar of Salt alluded to the Mortal Body being rendered a Permanent Statue, but not Changed or Transformed into another Identity while it retains its own Individuality. ( p. 79.)

Many suppose that before the Creation all was Solitude & Chaos. This is the most pernicious Idea that can enter the Mind, as it takes away all sublimity from the Bible & Limits all Existence to Creation & to Chaos, to the Time & Space fixed by the Corporeal Vegetative Eye, & leaves the man who entertains such an Idea the habitation of Unbelieving demons. Eternity Exists, and All things in Eternity, Independent of Creation, which was an act of Mercy. ( pp. 91, 92.)

The Greeks represent Chronos or Time as a very Aged Man ; this is a Fable, but the Real Vision of Time is in Eternal Youth. I have, however, somewhat accommodated my Figure of Time to the common opinion, as I myself am also infected by it, & my visions also infected, & and I see Time Aged, alas, too much so. Allegories are things that relate to Moral Virtues that do not Exist ; they are Allegories and dissimulations. But Time & Space are Real Beings, a Male & a Female. Time is Man, Space is Woman, and & Masculine Portion is Death. ( p. 91.)



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The Combats of Good & Evil is Eating of the Tree of Knowledge. The Combats of Truth & Error is Eating of the Tree of Life; these are not only Universal, but Particular. Each are Personified. There is not an Error but has a Man for its Agent, that is, it is a Man. There is not a Truth but it has also a Man. Good & Evil are Qualities in Every Man, whether a Good or Evil Man. These are Enemies & destroy one another by every means in their power, both of Deceit & of open Violence. The deist & the Christian are but the Results of these Opposing Natures. Many are deists who would in certain circumstances have been Christians in outward appearance. Voltaire was one of this number; he was as intolerant as an Inquisitor. Manners make the Man, not Habits. It is the same in Art: by their works ye shall know them; the Knave who is Converted to Deism, & the Knave who is Converted to Christianity is still a Knave, but he himself will not know it, tho' Every body else does. Christ comes, as he came at first, to deliver those who are bound under the Knave, not to deliver the Knave. He Comes to deliver Man, the Accused, & not Satan, the Accuser. We do not find anywhere that Satan is accused of Sin; he is only accused of Unbelief & thereby drawing Man into Sin that he may accuse him. Satan thinks that Sin is displeasing to God; he ought to know that Nothing is displeasing to God but Unbelief & Eating of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil. ( pp. 86, 90.)

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Men are admitted into Heaven not because they have curbed & governed their Passions or have No Passions, but because they have Cultivated their Understandings. The Treasures of Heaven are not Negations of Passions, but Realities of Intellect, from which all Passions Emanate Uncurbed in their Eternal Glory. The Fool shall not enter into Heaven let him be ever so Holy. ( p. 87.)

The Last Judgment is an Overwhelming of Bad Art & Science. Mental things are alone Real ; what is call'd Corporeal, Nobody knows of its Dwelling Place: it is a Fallacy, and its Existence an Imposture. Where is the Existence Out of Mind or Thought? Where is it but in the Mind of a Fool? Some people flatter themselves that there will be No Last Judgment & that Bad Art will be adopted & mixed with Good Art, that Error or Experiment will be made a part of Truth, & they boast that it is its Foundation ; these people flatter themselves : I will not flatter them. Error is Created. Truth is Eternal. Error, or Creation, will be burned up, & then, & not till Then, Truth or Eternity will appear. It is Burnt up the Moment Men Cease to behold it. I assert for My Self that I do not behold the Outward Creation & that to me it is hindrance & not Action ; it is as the dirt upon my feet, No part of Me. "What" it will be Question'd,

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“When the Sun rises do you not see a round disc of fire somewhat like a Guinea?” O no, no, I see an Innumerable company of the Heavenly host crying, ‘Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty.’ I question not my Corporeal or Vegetative Eye any more than I would Question a Window concerning a Sight. I look thro’ it & not with it. (p. 95.)

[END OF A VISION OF THE LAST JUDGMENT.]

I will next quote from the Introduction to the Fourth Chapter of *Jerusalem* a passage which will throw further light on the above. But before doing so a few words on what Blake means by “Jerusalem” may not be out of place. Readers will not imagine that Blake’s *Jerusalem* has anything to do with Palestine, since “Jerusalem” can be “builded in England’s green & pleasant land,” and also in any other land. “Jerusalem” is the Celestial Soul of Man, that is, of Humanity, as “Vala,” or “The Shadowy Female” of the poems, is Man’s Terrestrial Soul. This applies to Universal Man and Individual Man alike. In the Fall—the fall into

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division—the Masculine Intellect and the Feminine Intuition and Inspiration were Separated, and the trend of Evolution and Redemption is towards a Re-surrection into Unity.

“Jerusalem” of the poem is at once a woman and a city. And as a city is composed of its inhabitants, so each individual of a city is the city itself in epitome. Some years ago there was discovered in Egypt a fragment of a lost Gospel since published under the title of *Logia Iesu* in which there is a passage which illustrates Blake's Vision. I will now quote it. Jesus is speaking to his disciples :

The Kingdom of the Heavens is within you ; and whoever shall know himself shall find it. Strive therefore to know yourselves and ye shall be aware that ye are the Sons of the Heavenly Father ; and ye shall know that ye are in the City of God, *and ye are the City.*

I have italicised the last words as they show how a city can be personified and how a person can be a city. I will now give the quotation from *Jerusalem* (Plate 77) :

## WISDOM AND VISION

I know of no other Christianity and of no other Gospel than the liberty, both of body & mind, to exercise the Divine Arts of Imagination, Imagination, the real & Eternal World of which this Vegetable Universe is but a faint Shadow, & in which we shall live in our Eternal or Imaginative Bodies when these Vegetable Mortal Bodies are no more. The Apostles knew of no other Gospel. What were all their spiritual gifts? What is the Divine Spirit? Is the Holy Ghost any other than an Intellectual Fountain? What is the Harvest of the Gospel & its Labours? What is that Talent which it is a curse to hide? What are the Treasures of Heaven which we are to lay up for ourselves, are they any other than Mental Studies & Performances? What are all the Gifts of the Gospel, are they not all Mental Gifts? Is God a Spirit who must be worshipped in Spirit & in Truth, and are not the Gifts of the Spirit Every-thing to Man? O ye Religious, discountenance everyone among you who shall pretend to despise Art & Science! I call upon you in the Name of Jesus! What is the Life of Man but Art & Science? is it Meat and Drink? is not the Body more than Raiment? What is Mortality but things relating to the Body which Dies? What is Immortality but the things relating to the Spirit which Lives Eternally. What is the Joy of Heaven but Improvement in the things of the Spirit? What are the Pains of Hell but Ignorance, Bodily Lust, Idleness & devastation of the things of the Spirit?

## BLAKE ON THE LORD'S PRAYER

Let it not be imagined that anyone can plume himself on his wisdom and despise the fools. Neither folly nor wisdom is the monopoly of any man. "If others had not been foolish, we should be," wrote Blake. Also, "If the Fool would persist in his Folly he would become Wise." For my part I confess that it is mainly by the latter method that such wisdom as I can lay claim to has been acquired. I am, therefore, profoundly grateful to Dr. Thornton and to Bishop Watson for what they have written. I am conscious that in their place I could have written much in the same sense as they wrote, and if they had not written what they did, I for one should not have been startled by Blake out of a foolish complacency to open my eyes to its folly.

When we are told to "lay up treasures in heaven," it does not mean that we are to earn or buy some heavenly benefit for

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ourselves in a future life by practising moral virtues, giving alms, or by meticulously observing the Sabbath and ceremonial ordinances. That can never be. There is no debtor and creditor account with Heaven. It is in the Celestial aspect of the Individual Mind that the treasures must be stored. Each man must introduce them *into his own heaven*. No one can do this for him, any more than a man can be nourished by food consumed by others. Every man has Heaven and Earth and Hell in his own constitution, and it lies entirely in himself which he shall inhabit, and in which he shall lay up his treasures. "Hell is in Heaven," says Boehme, "and Heaven is in Hell. But angels see only the light, and devils only the Darkness." "It is not because Angels are Holier than men or devils that makes them Angels" says Blake, "but because *they do not Expect Holiness from one another, but from God only.*"

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By "cultivating our understandings" we are increasing our power of perceiving and digesting the treasures of thought and wisdom in which the world abounds, and so of "building Jerusalem in England's green and pleasant land." We are making them part of our Permanent Selves. And in order to attain this point of Celestial Vision we must sacrifice to it the Temporal Self with all its powers of mind and body.

The Light of Reason is comparable to the light of the stars. It is scattered and ineffectual. Star-light is sufficient to enable the Mariner to steer his ship over the pathless Sea of Time and Space, but it is not sufficient to disclose the objects which he passes to his view. The light of the Moon is the light of Imagination and the stars of Reason pale before it, but both are eclipsed when the Sun of Wisdom unfolds his beams. Then all Ratiocination is swept away and argument and disputing become folly



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This world, in Blake's Vision, is a graveyard, and our bodies are our Tombs. But we need not wait until our tombs are destroyed before we rise above them. That power lies in our opening our inward eyes and using them. The Day of man's body is the Night of his soul. Blake's poems are one prolonged call on "Albion" to awake—to open his eyes, and see as he really *IS*. This is the theme of *Jerusalem*—"Jerusalem" being the parted soul of Albion, as "Eve" was parted from "Adam."

At the opening of the Poem, in an address "To the Public" there is this :

Reader ! lover of books ! lover of heaven,  
And of that God from whom all things are given,  
Who in mysterious Sinai's awful cave  
To Man the wondrous art of writing gave :  
Again he speaks in thunder and in fire !  
Thunder of Thought, & flames of fierce desire :  
Even from the depths of Hell his voice I hear  
Within the unfathomed caverns of my Ear.  
Therefore I print ; nor vain my types shall be :  
*Heaven, Earth & Hell henceforth shall live  
in harmony.*

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I have italicised the last line because it shows that in Blake's Vision the entire economy of man—Heaven, Earth and Hell—are included in the process of Redemption. Elsewhere he wrote :

When Thought is clos'd in Caves Then love  
shall show its root in deepest Hell.

Here is the Invocation at the opening of the poem :

Of the Sleep of Ulro ! and of the passage through  
Eternal Death ! and of the awaking to Eternal Life.

This theme calls me in sleep night after night, &  
every morn  
Awakes me at sun-rise ; then I see the Saviour  
over me  
Spreading his beams of love, & dictating the words  
of this mild song.

“ Awake ! awake O sleeper of the land of shadows,  
“ wake ! expand !

“ I am in you and you in me, mutual in love divine ;  
“ Fibres of love from man to man thro' Albion's  
“ pleasant land.

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“ I am not a God afar off, I am a brother and friend ;  
“ Within your bosom I reside, and you reside in me ;  
“ Lo ! we are One ; forgiving all evil ; Not seeking  
“ recompense ;  
“ Ye are my members O ye sleepers of Beulah, land  
“ of Shades.”

Here is another passage from the same poem, Plate 5, describing what Blake felt to be the task imposed upon him :

Trembling I sit day and night, my friends are  
astonished at me,  
Yet they Forgive my wanderings. I rest not from  
my great task !  
*To open the Eternal Worlds, to open the immortal  
Eyes  
Of Man inwards into the World of Thought, into  
Eternity  
Ever expanding in the Bosom of God, the Human  
Imagination.*  
O Saviour pour upon me thy Spirit of meekness  
& love :  
Annihilate the Self-hood in me ; be thou all my  
life !  
Guide thou my hand which trembles exceedingly  
upon the rock of ages  
While I write . . . .

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The italics are mine. "Ulro" is Matter—Materiality. This "Life" is "Eternal Death," that is to say, *Death from Eternity*. The "Caves" in which "Thought" is enclosed, are, of course, our skulls.

One need not be able to follow all the workings of the poet's mind in penning these passages, but it is impossible not to feel the force of the inspiration working within them.

In the innermost sphere of Man *Seeing* is *Being*. "To See" is "to Be," and "to Be" is "to See." Man *is* where and what his consciousness is, and his awaking from sphere to sphere is the story of his progress through Eternal Death to Eternal Life. Not that eternal life is somewhere beyond the stars—it is all a matter of the awakening and opening of the faculties and powers that are already ours—the rising up of Man from the Nebuchadnezzar insanity into the dignity of the Human Form Divine.

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“I care not whether a man is good or evil; all I care is whether he is a Wise man or a Fool.” “Good” and “Evil” are relativities and temporalities and have no actual existence in Eternity; but Wisdom is a different matter.

Says Paracelsus :

All numbers are multiples of One ;  
All sciences converge to a Common point ;  
All Wisdom comes out of one Centre,  
And the Number of Wisdom is One.

Wisdom is Vision married to Judgment. The word is derived from two Nordic roots *Vid* “to see” and *dom* “judgment.” The same root is found in the Sanskrit *Vid*, in the Greek *ιδειν*, and in the Latin *Videre*. And when the Latin word for Wisdom, *Sapientia*, and the Greek word for Wisdom, *Σοφια*, are traced to their source, it will be found that “Vision” is not far from the roots of them both in the Greek word for the *EYE*—*ὄψ*. So when Blake says that he only cares

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whether a man is a wise man or is a fool, it is another way of saying that with him everything is Vision united with the power of interpreting and understanding that which Vision—*internal* Vision—reveals.

It is not for nothing that at the close of the century following Blake's death, every line which he wrote, every stroke of his pen and pencil, graver and brush, is being greedily sought for. This is of the happiest augury for the "New Age"—which is now our own Age—on which his eyes were fixed. It is not everyone who brings into the world with him the faculties of "conversing with Paradise" in the degree which was habitual with him. But the blindest of us can see something of the paradises he has opened to our view, and the most foolish of us may find in ourselves an echo of the Wisdom of Eternity, and refuse any longer to be deluded by the Follies of Time.

