

# Isis Unveiled



**H. P. Blavatsky**

# **PART ONE. SCIENCE**

## CHAPTER 1

"Ego sum qui sum."--An axiom of Hermetic Philosophy.

"We commenced research where modern conjecture closes its faithless wings. And with us, those were the common elements of science which the sages of to-day disdain as wild chimeras, or despair of as unfathomable mysteries."--**BULWER'S "ZANONI."**

**THERE** exists somewhere in this wide world an old Book--so very old that our modern antiquarians might ponder over its pages an indefinite time, and still not quite agree as to the nature of the fabric upon which it is written. It is the only original copy now in existence. The most ancient Hebrew document on occult learning--the *Siphra Dzeniouta*--was compiled from it, and that at a time when the former was already considered in the light of a literary relic. One of its illustrations represents the Divine Essence emanating from **ADAM**<sup>1</sup> like a luminous arc proceeding to form a circle; and then, having attained the highest point of its circumference, the ineffable Glory bends back again, and returns to earth, bringing a higher type of humanity in its vortex. As it approaches nearer and nearer to our planet, the Emanation becomes more and more shadowy, until upon touching the ground it is as black as night.

A conviction, founded upon *seventy* thousand years of experience,<sup>2</sup> as they allege, has been entertained by hermetic philosophers of all periods that matter has in time become, through sin, more gross and dense than it was at man's first formation; that, at the beginning, the human body was of a half-ethereal nature; and that, before the fall, mankind communed freely with the now unseen universes. But since that time matter has become the formidable barrier between us and the world of spirits. The oldest esoteric traditions also teach that,

before the mystic Adam, many races of human beings lived and died out, each giving place in its turn to another. Were these precedent types more perfect? Did any of them belong to the *winged* race of men mentioned by Plato in *Phaedrus*? It is the special province of science to solve the problem. The caves of France and the relics of the stone age afford a point at which to begin.

As the cycle proceeded, man's eyes were more and more opened, until he came to know "good and evil" as well as the Elohim themselves. Having reached its summit, the cycle began to go downward. When the arc attained a certain point which brought it parallel with the fixed line of our terrestrial plane, the man was furnished by nature with "coats of *skin*," and the Lord God "clothed them."

This same belief in the pre-existence of a far more spiritual race than the one to which we now belong can be traced back to the earliest traditions of nearly every people. In the ancient Quiche manuscript, published by Brasseur de Bourbourg--the *Popol Vuh*--the first men are mentioned as a race that could reason and speak, whose sight was unlimited, and who knew all things at once. According to Philo Judaeus, the air is filled with an invisible host of spirits, some of whom are free from evil and immortal, and others are pernicious and mortal. "From the sons of EL we are descended, and sons of EL must we become again." And the unequivocal statement of the anonymous Gnostic who wrote *The Gospel according to John*, that "as many as received Him," *i.e.*, who followed practically the esoteric doctrine of Jesus, would "become the sons of God," points to the same belief. (i., 12.) "Know ye not, ye are *gods*?" exclaimed the Master. Plato describes admirably in *Phaedrus* the state in which man once was, and what he will become again: before, and after the "loss of his wings"; when "he lived among the gods, a god himself in the airy world." From the remotest periods religious philosophies taught that

the whole universe was filled with divine and spiritual beings of divers races. From one of these evolved, in the course of time, ADAM, the primitive man.

The Kalmucks and some tribes of Siberia also describe in their legends earlier creations than our present race. These beings, they say, were possessed of almost boundless knowledge, and in their audacity even threatened rebellion against the Great Chief Spirit. To punish their presumption and humble them, he imprisoned them *in bodies*, and so shut in their senses. From these they can escape but through long repentance, self-purification, and development. Their *Shamans*, they think, occasionally enjoy the divine powers originally possessed by all human beings.

The Astor Library of New York has recently been enriched by a facsimile of an Egyptian Medical Treatise, written in the sixteenth century B.C. (or, more precisely, 1552 B.C.), which, according to the commonly received chronology, is the time when Moses was just twenty-one years of age. The original is written upon the inner bark of *Cyperus papyrus*, and has been pronounced by Professor Schenk, of Leipsig, not only genuine, but also the most perfect ever seen. It consists of a single sheet of yellow-brown papyrus of finest quality, three-tenths of a metre wide, more than twenty metres long, and forming one roll divided into one hundred and ten pages, all carefully numbered. It was purchased in Egypt, in 1872-3, by the archaeologist Ebers, of "a well-to-do Arab from Luxor." The New York *Tribune*, commenting upon the circumstance, says: The papyrus "bears internal evidence of being one of the six *Hermetic Books on Medicine*, named by Clement of Alexandria."

The editor further says: "At the time of Iamblichus, A.D. 363, the priests of Egypt showed forty-two books which they attributed to Hermes (Thuti). Of these, according to that author, thirty-six

contained the history of all human knowledge; the last six treated of anatomy, of pathology, of affections of the eye, instruments of surgery, and of medicines.<sup>3</sup> The *Papyrus Ebers* is indisputably one of these ancient Hermetic works."

If so clear a ray of light has been thrown upon ancient Egyptian science, by the accidental (?) encounter of the German archaeologist with one "well-to-do Arab" from Luxor, how can we know what sunshine may be let in upon the dark crypts of history by an equally accidental meeting between some other prosperous Egyptian and another enterprising student of antiquity!

*The discoveries of modern science do not disagree with the oldest traditions which claim an incredible antiquity for our race.* Within the last few years geology, which previously had only conceded that man could be traced as far back as the tertiary period, has found unanswerable proofs that human existence antedates the last glaciation of Europe--over 250,000 years! A hard nut, this, for Patristic Theology to crack; but an accepted fact with the ancient philosophers.

Moreover, fossil implements have been exhumed together with human remains, which show that man hunted in those remote times, and knew how to build a fire. But the forward step has not yet been taken in this search for the origin of the race; science comes to a dead stop, and waits for future proofs. Unfortunately, anthropology and psychology possess no Cuvier; neither geologists nor archaeologists are able to construct, from the fragmentary bits hitherto discovered, the perfect skeleton of the triple man--physical, intellectual, and spiritual. Because the fossil implements of man are found to become more rough and uncouth as geology penetrates deeper into the bowels of the earth, it seems a proof to science that the closer we come to the origin of man, the more savage and brute-like he must

be. Strange logic! Does the finding of the remains in the cave of Devon prove that there were no contemporary races then who were highly civilized? When the present population of the earth have disappeared, and some archaeologist belonging to the "coming race" of the distant future shall excavate the domestic implements of one of our Indian or Andaman Island tribes, will he be justified in concluding that mankind in the nineteenth century was "just emerging from the Stone Age"?

It has lately been the fashion to speak of "the untenable conceptions of an uncultivated past." *As though it were possible to hide behind an epigram the intellectual quarries out of which the reputations of so many modern philosophers have been carved!* Just as Tyndall is ever ready to disparage ancient philosophers--for a dressing-up of whose ideas more than one distinguished scientist has derived honor and credit--so the geologists seem more and more inclined to take for granted that all of the archaic races were contemporaneously in a state of dense barbarism. But not all of our best authorities agree in this opinion. Some of the most eminent maintain exactly the reverse. Max Muller, for instance, says: "Many things are still unintelligible to us, and the hieroglyphic language of antiquity records but half of the mind's unconscious intentions. Yet more and more the image of man, in whatever clime we meet him, rises before us, noble and pure from the very beginning; even his errors we learn to understand, even his dreams we begin to interpret. As far as we can trace back the footsteps of man, even on the lowest strata of history, we see the divine gift of a sound and sober intellect belonging to him from the very first, and the idea of a humanity emerging slowly from the depths of an animal brutality can never be maintained again."<sup>4</sup>

As it is claimed to be unphilosophical to inquire into first causes, scientists now occupy themselves with considering their physical effects. The field of scientific investigation is therefore bounded by

physical nature. When once its limits are reached, enquiry must stop, and their work be recommenced. With all due respect to our learned men, they are like the squirrel upon its revolving wheel, for they are doomed to turn their "matter" over and over again. Science is a mighty potency, and it is not for us pigmies to question her. But the "*scientists*" are not themselves science embodied any more than the men of our planet are the planet itself. We have neither the right to demand, nor power to compel our "modern-day philosopher" to accept without challenge a geographical description of the dark side of the moon. But, if in some lunar cataclysm one of her inhabitants should be hurled thence into the attraction of our atmosphere, and land, safe and sound, at Dr. Carpenter's door, he would be indictable as recreant to professional duty if he should fail to set the physical problem at rest.

For a man of science to refuse an opportunity to investigate any new phenomenon, whether it comes to him in the shape of a man from the moon, or a ghost from the Eddy homestead, is alike reprehensible.

Whether arrived at by the method of Aristotle, or that of Plato, we need not stop to inquire; but it is a fact that both the inner and outer natures of man are claimed to have been thoroughly understood by the ancient andrologists. Notwithstanding the superficial hypotheses of geologists, we are beginning to have almost daily proofs in corroboration of the assertions of those philosophers.

*They divided the interminable periods of human existence on this planet into cycles, during each of which mankind gradually reached the culminating point of highest civilization and gradually relapsed into abject barbarism.* To what eminence the race in its progress had several times arrived may be feebly surmised by the wonderful monuments of old, still visible, and the descriptions given by

Herodotus of other marvels of which no traces now remain. Even in his days the gigantic structures of many pyramids and world-famous temples were but masses of ruins. Scattered by the unrelenting hand of time, they are described by the Father of History as "these venerable witnesses of the long bygone glory of departed ancestors." He "shrinks from speaking of divine things," and gives to posterity but an imperfect description from hearsay of some marvellous subterranean chambers of the Labyrinth, where lay--and now lie--concealed, the sacred remains of the King-Initiates.

We can judge, moreover, of the lofty civilization reached in some periods of antiquity by the historical descriptions of the ages of the Ptolemies, yet in that epoch the arts and sciences were considered to be degenerating, and the secret of a number of the former had been already lost. In the recent excavations of Mariette-Bey, at the foot of the Pyramids, statues of wood and other relics have been exhumed, which show that long before the period of the first dynasties the Egyptians had attained to a refinement and perfection which is calculated to excite the wonder of even the most ardent admirers of Grecian art. Bayard Taylor describes these statues in one of his lectures, and tells us that the beauty of the heads, ornamented with eyes of precious stones and copper eyelids, is unsurpassed. Far below the stratum of sand in which lay the remains gathered into the collections of Lepsius, Abbott, and the British Museum, were found buried the tangible proofs of the hermetic doctrine of cycles which has been already explained.

Dr. Schliemann, the enthusiastic Hellenist, has recently found, in his excavations in the Troad, abundant evidences of the same gradual change from barbarism to civilization, and from civilization to barbarism again. Why then should we feel so reluctant to admit the possibility that, if the antediluvians were so much better versed than ourselves in certain sciences as to have been perfectly acquainted

with important arts, which we now term *lost*, they might have equally excelled in psychological knowledge? Such a hypothesis must be considered as reasonable as any other until some countervailing evidence shall be discovered to destroy it.

Every true *savant* admits that in many respects human knowledge is yet in its infancy. Can it be that our cycle began in ages comparatively recent? *These cycles*, according to the Chaldean philosophy, *do not embrace all mankind at one and the same time*. Professor Draper partially corroborates this view by saying that the periods into which geology has "found it convenient to divide the progress of man in civilization are not abrupt epochs which hold good simultaneously for the whole human race"; giving as an instance the "wandering Indians of America," who "are only at the present moment emerging from the stone age." Thus more than once scientific men have unwittingly confirmed the testimony of the ancients.

Any Kabalist well acquainted with the Pythagorean system of numerals and geometry can demonstrate that the metaphysical views of Plato were based upon the strictest mathematical principles. "True mathematics," says the *Magicon*, "is something with which all higher sciences are connected; common mathematics is but a deceitful phantasmagoria, whose much-praised infallibility only arises from this--that materials, conditions, and references are made its foundation." Scientists who believe they have adopted the Aristotelian method only because they creep when they do not run from demonstrated particulars to universals, glorify this method of inductive philosophy, and reject that of Plato, which they treat as unsubstantial. Professor Draper laments that such speculative mystics as Ammonius Saccas and Plotinus should have taken the place "of the severe geometers of the old museum."<sup>5</sup> He forgets that geometry, of all sciences the only one which proceeds from

universals to particulars, was precisely the method employed by Plato in his philosophy. As long as exact science confines its observations to physical conditions and proceeds Aristotle-like, it certainly cannot fail. But notwithstanding that the world of matter is boundless for us, it still is finite; and thus materialism will turn forever in this vitiated circle, unable to soar higher than the circumference will permit. The cosmological theory of numerals which Pythagoras learned from the Egyptian hierophants, is alone able to reconcile the two units, matter and spirit, and cause each to demonstrate the other mathematically.

The sacred numbers of the universe in their esoteric combination solve the great problem and explain the theory of radiation and the cycle of the emanations. The lower orders before they develop into higher ones must emanate from the higher spiritual ones, and when arrived at the turning-point, be reabsorbed again into the infinite.

Physiology, like everything else in this world of constant evolution, is subject to the cyclic revolution. As it now seems to be hardly emerging from the shadows of the lower arc, so it may be one day proved to have been at the highest point of the circumference of the circle far earlier than the days of Pythagoras.

Mochus, the Sidonian, the physiologist and teacher of the science of anatomy, flourished long before the Sage of Samos; and the latter received the sacred instructions from his disciples and descendants. Pythagoras, the pure philosopher, the deeply-versed in the profounder phenomena of nature, the noble inheritor of the ancient lore, whose great aim was to free the soul from the fetters of sense and force it to realize its powers, must live eternally in human memory.

*The impenetrable veil of arcane secrecy was thrown over the sciences taught in the sanctuary. This is the cause of the modern*

depreciating of the ancient philosophies. Even Plato and Philo Judaeus have been accused by many a commentator of absurd inconsistencies, whereas the design which underlies the maze of metaphysical contradictions so perplexing to the reader of the *Timaeus*, is but too evident. But has Plato ever been read understandingly by one of the expounders of the classics? This is a question warranted by the criticisms to be found in such authors as Stalbaum, Schleirmacher, Ficinus (Latin translation), Heindorf, Sydenham, Buttmann, Taylor and Burges, to say nothing of lesser authorities. The covert allusions of the Greek philosopher to esoteric things have manifestly baffled these commentators to the last degree. They not only with unblushing coolness suggest as to certain difficult passages that another phraseology was evidently intended, but they audaciously make the changes! The Orphic line:

"Of the song, the order of the *sixth race* close" --

which can only be interpreted as a reference to the *sixth race* evolved in the consecutive evolution of the spheres,<sup>6</sup> Burges says: ". . . was evidently taken from a cosmogony *where man was feigned to be created the last.*"<sup>7</sup> --Ought not one who undertakes to edit another's works at least understand what his author means?

Indeed, the ancient philosophers seem to be generally held, even by the least prejudiced of our modern critics, to have lacked that profundity and thorough knowledge in the exact sciences of which our century is so boastful. It is even questioned whether they understood that basic scientific principle: *ex nihilo nihil fit*. If they suspected the indestructibility of matter at all,--say these commentators--it was not in consequence of a firmly-established formula but only through an intuitional reasoning and by analogy.

We hold to the contrary opinion. The speculations of these philosophers upon matter were open to public criticism: but their

teachings in regard to spiritual things were profoundly esoteric. Being thus sworn to secrecy and religious silence upon abstruse subjects involving the relations of spirit and matter, they rivalled each other in their ingenious methods for concealing their real opinions.

The doctrine of *Metempsychosis* has been abundantly ridiculed by men of science and rejected by theologians, yet if it had been properly understood in its application to the indestructibility of matter and the immortality of spirit, it would have been perceived that it is a sublime conception. Should we not first regard the subject from the stand-point of the ancients before venturing to disparage its teachers? The solution of the great problem of *eternity* belongs neither to religious superstition nor to gross materialism. The harmony and mathematical equiformity of the double evolution--spiritual and physical--are elucidated only in the universal numerals of Pythagoras, who built his system entirely upon the so-called "metrical speech" of the Hindu *Vedas*. It is but lately that one of the most zealous Sanskrit scholars, Martin Haug, undertook the translation of the *Aitareya Brahmana* of the *Rig-Veda*. It had been till that time entirely unknown; these explanations indicate beyond dispute the identity of the Pythagorean and Brahmanical systems. In both, the esoteric significance is derived from the number: in the former, from the mystic relation of every number to everything intelligible to the human mind; in the latter, from the number of syllables of which each verse in the *Mantras* consists. Plato, the ardent disciple of Pythagoras, realized it so fully as to maintain that the Dodecahedron was the geometrical figure employed by the *Demiurgus* in constructing the universe. Some of these figures had a peculiarly solemn significance. For instance *four*, of which the Dodecahedron is the trine, was held sacred by the Pythagoreans. It is the perfect square, and neither of the bounding lines exceeds the other in length, by a single point. It is the emblem of moral justice

and divine equity geometrically expressed. All the powers and great symphonies of physical and spiritual nature lie inscribed within the perfect square; and the ineffable name of Him, which name otherwise, would remain unutterable, was replaced by this sacred number 4 the most binding and solemn oath with the ancient mystics--the *Tetractys*.

If the Pythagorean metempsychosis should be thoroughly explained and compared with the modern theory of evolution, it would be found to supply every "missing link" in the chain of the latter. But who of our scientists would consent to lose his precious time over the vagaries of the ancients. Notwithstanding proofs to the contrary, they not only deny that the nations of the archaic periods, but even the ancient philosophers had any positive knowledge of the Heliocentric system. The "Venerable Bedes," the Augustines and Lactantii appear to have smothered, with their dogmatic ignorance, all faith in the more ancient theologians of the pre-Christian centuries. But now philology and a closer acquaintance with Sanskrit literature have partially enabled us to vindicate them from these unmerited imputations. In the *Vedas*, for instance, we find positive proof that so long ago as 2000 B.C., the Hindu sages and scholars must have been acquainted with the rotundity of our globe and the Heliocentric system. Hence, Pythagoras and Plato knew well this astronomical truth; for Pythagoras obtained his knowledge in India, or from men who had been there, and Plato faithfully echoed his teachings. We will quote two passages from the *Aitareya Brahmana*:

In the "*Serpent-Mantra*,"<sup>8</sup> the *Brahmana* declares as follows: that this *Mantra* is that one which was seen by the Queen of the Serpents, *Sarpa-rajni*; because the earth (*iyam*) is the Queen of the Serpents, as she is the mother and queen of all that moves (*sarpat*). In the beginning she (the earth) was but one head (round), without hair (*bald*), *i.e.*, without vegetation. She then perceived this *Mantra*

which confers upon him who knows it, the power of assuming any form which he might desire. She "pronounced the *Mantra*," *i.e.*, sacrificed to the gods; and, in consequence, immediately obtained a motley appearance; she became variegated, and able to produce any form she might like, *changing one form into another*. This *Mantra* begins with the words: "*Ayam gauh pris'nir akramit*" (x., 189).

The description of the earth in the shape of a *round* and *bald* head, which was *soft* at first, and became hard only from being breathed upon by the god Vayu, the lord of the air, forcibly suggests the idea that the authors of the sacred Vedic books knew the earth to be *round* or spherical; moreover, that it had been a *gelatinous* mass at first, which gradually cooled off under the influence of the air and time. So much for their knowledge about our globe's sphericity; and now we will present the testimony upon which we base our assertion, that the Hindus were perfectly acquainted with the Heliocentric system, at least 2000 years B.C.

In the same treatise the *Hotar*, (priest), is taught how the *Shastras* should be repeated, and how the phenomena of sunrise and sunset are to be explained. It says: "The Agnishtoma is that one (that god) who burns. The sun *never sets nor rises*. When people think the sun is setting, it is *not so*; they are mistaken. For after having arrived at the end of the day, it produces two opposite effects, making night to what is below, and day to what is on the other side. When they (the people) believe it rises in the morning, the sun only does thus: having reached the end of the night, it makes itself produce two opposite effects, making day to what is below, and night to what is on the other side. In fact the sun never sets; nor does it set for him who has such a knowledge. . . ."9

This sentence is so conclusive, that even the translator of the *Rig-Veda*, Dr. Haug, was forced to remark it. He says this passage

contains "the *denial* of the existence of sunrise and sunset," and that the author supposes the sun "to remain always in its high position."<sup>10</sup>

In one of the earliest *Nivids*, Rishi Kutsa, a Hindu sage of the remotest antiquity, explains the allegory of the first laws given to the celestial bodies. For doing "what she ought not to do," Anahit (Anaitis or Nana, the Persian Venus), representing the earth in the legend, is sentenced to turn round the sun. The *Sattras*, or sacrificial sessions<sup>11</sup> prove undoubtedly that so early as in the eighteenth or twentieth century B.C., the Hindus had made considerable progress in astronomical science. The *Sattras* lasted one year, and were "nothing but an imitation of the sun's yearly course. They were divided, says Haug, into two distinct parts, each consisting of six months of thirty days each; in the midst of both was the *Vishuvan* (equator or central day), cutting the whole *Sattras* into two halves, etc."<sup>12</sup> This scholar, although he ascribes the composition of the bulk of the *Brahmanas* to the period 1400-1200 B.C., is of opinion that the oldest of the hymns may be placed at the very commencement of Vedic literature, between the years 2400-2000, B.C. He finds no reason for considering the *Vedas* less ancient than the sacred books of the Chinese. As the *Shu-King* or *Book of History*, and the sacrificial songs of the *Shi-King*, or *Book of Odes*, have been proved to have an antiquity as early as 2200, B.C., our philologists may yet be compelled before long to acknowledge, that in astronomical knowledge, the antediluvian Hindus were their masters.

At all events, there are facts which prove that certain astronomical calculations were as correct with the Chaldeans in the days of Julius Caesar as they are now. When the calendar was reformed by the Conqueror, the civil year was found to correspond so little with the seasons, that summer had merged into the autumn months, and the autumn months into full winter. It was Sosigenes, the Chaldean astronomer, who restored order into the confusion, by putting back

the 25th of March ninety days, thus making it correspond with the vernal equinox; and it was Sosigenes, again, who fixed the lengths of the months *as they now remain*.

In America, it was found by the Montezuman army, that the calendar of the Aztecs gave an equal number of days and weeks to each month. The extreme accuracy of their astronomical calculations was so great, that *no error* has been discovered in their reckoning by subsequent verifications; while the Europeans, who landed in Mexico in 1519, were, by the Julian calendar, nearly eleven days in advance of the exact time.

It is to the priceless and accurate translations of the Vedic Books, and to the personal researches of Dr. Haug, that we are indebted for the corroboration of the claims of the hermetic philosophers. That the period of Zarathustra Spitama (Zoroaster) was of untold antiquity, can be easily proved. The *Brahmanas*, to which Haug ascribes four thousand years, describe the religious contest between the ancient Hindus, who lived in the pre-Vedic period, and the Iranians. The battles between the *Devas* and the *Asuras*--the former representing the *Hindus* and the latter the Iranians--are described at length in the sacred books. As the Iranian prophet was the first to raise himself against what he called the "idolatry" of the Brahmins, and to designate them as the *Devas*(devils), how far back must then have been this religious crisis?

"This contest," answers Dr. Haug, "must have appeared to the authors of the *Brahmanas* as old as the feats of King Arthur appear to English writers of the nineteenth century."

There was not a philosopher of any notoriety who did not hold to this doctrine of metempsychosis, as taught by the Brahmins, Buddhists, and later by the Pythagoreans, in its esoteric sense, whether he expressed it more or less intelligibly. Origen and Clemens

Alexandrinus, Synesius and Chalcidius, all believed in it; and the Gnostics, who are unhesitatingly proclaimed by history as a body of the most refined, learned, and enlightened men,<sup>13</sup> were all believers in metempsychosis. Socrates entertained opinions identical with those of Pythagoras; and both, as the penalty of their divine philosophy, were put to a violent death. The rabble has been the same in all ages. Materialism has been, and will ever be blind to spiritual truths. These philosophers held, with the Hindus, that God had infused into matter a portion of his own Divine Spirit, which animates and moves every particle. They taught that men have *two souls*, of separate and quite different natures: the one perishable--the Astral Soul, or the inner, fluidic body--the other incorruptible and immortal--the *Augoeides*, or portion of the Divine Spirit; that the mortal or Astral Soul perishes at each gradual change at the threshold of every new sphere, becoming with every transmigration more purified. The astral man, intangible and invisible as he might be to our mortal, earthly senses, is still constituted of matter, though sublimated. Aristotle, notwithstanding that for political reasons of his own he maintained a prudent silence as to certain esoteric matters, expressed very clearly his opinion on the subject. It was his belief that human souls are emanations of God, that are finally re-absorbed into Divinity. Zeno, the founder of the Stoics, taught that there are "two eternal qualities throughout nature: the one active, or male; the other passive, or female: that the former is pure, subtile ether, or Divine Spirit; the other entirely inert in itself till united with the active principle. That the Divine Spirit acting upon matter produced fire, water, earth, and air; and that it is the sole efficient principle by which all nature is moved. The Stoics, like the Hindu sages, believed in the final absorption. St. Justin believed in the emanation of these souls from Divinity, and Tatian, the Assyrian, his disciple, declared that "man was as immortal as God himself."<sup>14</sup>

That profoundly significant verse of the *Genesis*, "And to every beast of the earth, and to every fowl of the air, and to everything that creepeth upon the earth, I gave *a living soul*, . . . ." should arrest the attention of every Hebrew scholar capable of reading the Scripture in its original, instead of following the erroneous translation, in which the phrase reads, "wherein *there is life*."<sup>15</sup>

From the first to the last chapters, the translators of the Jewish Sacred Books misconstrued this meaning. They have even changed the spelling of the name of God, as Sir W. Drummond proves. Thus *El*, if written correctly, would read *Al*, for it stands in the original אל-Al, and, according to Higgins, this word means the god Mithra, the *Sun*, the preserver and savior. Sir W. Drummond shows that *Beth-El* means the House of the *Sun* in its literal translation, and not of God. "*El*, in the composition of these Canaanite names, does not signify *Deus*, but *Sol*."<sup>16</sup> Thus Theology has disfigured ancient Theosophy, and Science ancient Philosophy.<sup>17</sup>

For lack of comprehension of this great philosophical principle, the methods of modern science, however exact, must end in nullity. In no one branch can it demonstrate the origin and ultimate of things. Instead of tracing the effect from its primal source, its progress is the reverse. Its higher types, as it teaches, are all evolved from antecedent lower ones. It starts from the bottom of the cycle, led on step by step in the great labyrinth of nature by a thread of matter. As soon as this breaks and the clue is lost, it recoils in affright from the Incomprehensible, and confesses itself *powerless*. Not so did Plato and his disciples. With him *the lower types were but the concrete images of the higher abstract ones*. The soul, which is immortal, has an arithmetical, as the body has a geometrical, beginning. This beginning, as the reflection of the great universal ARCHÆUS, is self-moving, and from the centre diffuses itself over the whole body of the microcosm.

It was the sad perception of this truth that made Tyndall confess how powerless is science, even over the world of matter. "The first marshalling of the atoms, on which all subsequent action depends, baffles a keener power than that of the microscope." "Through pure excess of complexity, and long before observation can have any voice in the matter, the most highly trained intellect, the most refined and disciplined imagination, *retires in bewilderment from the contemplation of the problem*. We are struck dumb by an astonishment which no microscope can relieve, doubting not only the power of our instrument, but even whether we ourselves possess the intellectual elements which will ever enable us to grapple with the ultimate structural energies of nature."

The fundamental geometrical figure of the Kabala--that figure which tradition and the esoteric doctrines tell us was given by the Deity itself to Moses on Mount Sinai<sup>18</sup> --contains in its grandiose, because simple combination, the key to the universal problem. This figure contains in itself all the others. For those who are able to master it, there is no need to exercise imagination. No earthly microscope can be compared with the keenness of the spiritual perception.

And even for those who are unacquainted with the GREAT SCIENCE, the description given by a well-trained child-psychometer of the genesis of a grain, a fragment of crystal, or any other object--is worth all the telescopes and microscopes of "exact science."

There may be more truth in the adventurous pangensis of Darwin--whom Tyndall calls a "soaring speculator"--than in the cautious, line-bound hypothesis of the latter; who, in common with other thinkers of his class, surrounds his imagination "by the firm frontiers of reason." The theory of a microscopic germ which contains in itself "a world of minor germs," soars in one sense at least into the infinite. It

oversteps the world of matter, and begins unconsciously busying itself in the world of spirit.

If we accept Darwin's theory of the development of species, we find that his starting-point is placed in front of an open door. We are at liberty with him, to either remain within, or cross the threshold, beyond which lies the limitless and the incomprehensible, or rather the *Unutterable*. If our mortal language is inadequate to express what our spirit dimly foresees in the great "*Beyond*"--while on this earth--it *must* realize it at some point in the timeless Eternity.

Not so with Professor Huxley's theory of the "Physical Basis of Life." Regardless of the formidable majority of "nays" from his German brother-scientists, he creates a universal *protoplasm* and appoints its cells to become henceforth the sacred founts of the principle of all *life*. By making the latter identical in living man, "dead mutton," a nettle-sting, and a lobster; by shutting in, in the molecular cell of the protoplasm, the life-principle, and by shutting out from it the divine influx which comes with subsequent evolution, he closes every door against any possible escape. Like an able tactician he converts his "*laws and facts*" into sentries whom he causes to mount guard over every issue. The standard under which he rallies them is inscribed with the word "necessity"; but hardly is it unfurled when he mocks the legend and calls it "an empty shadow of my own imagination."<sup>19</sup>

The fundamental doctrines of spiritualism, he says, "lie outside the limits of philosophical inquiry." We will be bold enough to contradict this assertion, and say that they lie a great deal more within such inquiry than Mr. Huxley's protoplasm. Insomuch that they present evident and palpable facts of the existence of *spirit*, and the protoplasmic cells, *once dead*, present none whatever of being the originators or the bases of life, as this one of the few "foremost thinkers of the day" wants us to believe.<sup>20</sup>

The ancient Kabalist rested upon no hypothesis till he could lay its basis upon the firm rock of recorded experiment.

But the too great dependence upon physical facts led to a growth of materialism and a decadence of spirituality and faith. At the time of Aristotle, this was the prevailing tendency of thought. And though the Delphic commandment was not as yet completely eliminated from Grecian thought; and some philosophers still held that "in order to know what man *is*, we ought to know what man *was*"--still materialism had already begun to gnaw at the root of faith. The Mysteries themselves had degenerated in a very great degree into mere priestly speculations and religious fraud. Few were the true adepts and initiates, the heirs and descendants of those who had been dispersed by the conquering swords of various invaders of Old Egypt.

The time predicted by the great Hermes in his dialogue with &Aelig;sculapius had indeed come; the time when impious foreigners would accuse Egypt of adoring monsters, and naught but the letters engraved in stone upon her monuments would survive--enigmas incredible to posterity. Their sacred scribes and hierophants were wanderers upon the face of the earth. Obligated from fear of a profanation of the sacred mysteries to seek refuge among the Hermetic fraternities--known later as the *Essenes*--their esoteric knowledge was buried deeper than ever. The triumphant brand of Aristotle's pupil swept away from his path of conquest every vestige of a once pure religion, and Aristotle himself, the type and child of his epoch, though instructed in the secret science of the Egyptians, knew but little of this crowning result of millenniums of esoteric studies.

As well as those who lived in the days of the Psammetics, our present-day philosophers "lift the Veil of Isis"--for Isis is but the

symbol of nature. But, they see only her physical forms. The soul within escapes their view; and the Divine Mother has no answer for them. There are anatomists, who, uncovering to sight no indwelling spirit under the layers of muscles, the network of nerves, or the cineritious matter, which they lift with the point of the scalpel, assert that man has no soul. Such are as purblind in sophistry as the student, who, confining his research to the cold letter of the Kabala, dares say it has no vivifying spirit. To see the true man who once inhabited the subject which lies before him, on the dissecting table, the surgeon must use other eyes than those of his body. So, the glorious truth covered up in the hieratic writings of the ancient papyri can be revealed only to him who possesses the faculty of intuition--which, if we call reason the eye of the mind, may be defined as the eye of the soul.

Our modern science acknowledges a Supreme Power, an Invisible Principle, but denies a Supreme Being, or Personal God.<sup>21</sup> Logically, the difference between the two might be questioned; for in this case *the Power and the Being are identical*. Human reason can hardly imagine to itself an Intelligent Supreme Power without associating it with the idea of an Intelligent Being. The masses can never be expected to have a clear conception of the omnipotence and omnipresence of a supreme God, without investing with those attributes a gigantic projection of their own personality. But the kabalists have never looked upon the invisible **EN-SOPH** otherwise than as a *Power*.

So far our modern positivists have been anticipated by thousands of ages, in their cautious philosophy. What the hermetic adept claims to demonstrate is, that simple common sense precludes the possibility that the universe is the result of mere chance. Such an idea appears to him more absurd than to think that the problems of Euclid were unconsciously formed by a monkey playing with geometrical figures.

Very few Christians understand, if indeed they know anything at all, of the Jewish Theology. The *Talmud* is the darkest of enigmas even for most Jews, while those Hebrew scholars who do comprehend it do not boast of their knowledge. Their kabalistic books are still less understood by them; for in our days more Christian than Jewish students are engrossed in the elimination of their great truths. How much less is definitely known of the Oriental, or the universal Kabala! Its adepts are few; but these heirs elect of the sages who first discovered "the starry truths which shone on the great Shemaia of the Chaldean lore"<sup>22</sup> have solved the "absolute" and are now resting from their grand labor. They cannot go beyond that which is given to mortals of this earth to know; and no one, not even these elect, can trespass beyond the line drawn by the finger of the Divinity itself. Travellers have met these adepts on the shores of the sacred Ganges, brushed against them in the silent ruins of Thebes, and in the mysterious deserted chambers of Luxor. Within the halls upon whose blue and golden vaults the weird signs attract attention, but whose secret meaning is never penetrated by the idle gazers, they have been seen but seldom recognized. Historical memoirs have recorded their presence in the brilliantly illuminated *salons* of European aristocracy. They have been encountered again on the arid and desolate plains of the Great Sahara, as in the caves of Elephanta. They may be found everywhere, but make themselves known only to those who have devoted their lives to unselfish study, and are not likely to turn back.

Maimonides, the great Jewish theologian and historian, who at one time was almost deified by his countrymen and afterward treated as a heretic, remarks, that the more absurd and void of sense the *Talmud* seems the more sublime is the secret meaning. This learned man has successfully demonstrated that the Chaldean Magic, the science of Moses and other learned thaumaturgists was wholly based on an extensive knowledge of the various and now forgotten

branches of natural science. Thoroughly acquainted with all the resources of the vegetable, animal, and mineral kingdoms, experts in occult chemistry and physics, psychologists as well as physiologists, why wonder that the graduates or adepts instructed in the mysterious sanctuaries of the temples, could perform wonders, which even in our days of enlightenment would appear supernatural?

It is an insult to human nature to brand magic and the occult science with the name of imposture. To believe that for so many thousands of years, one-half of mankind practiced deception and fraud on the other half, is equivalent to saying that the human race was composed only of knaves and incurable idiots. Where is the country in which magic was not practised? At what age was it wholly forgotten?

In the oldest documents now in our possession--the *Vedas* and the older laws of *Manu*--we find many magical rites practiced and permitted by the Brahmins.<sup>23</sup> Thibet, Japan and China teach in the present age that which was taught by the oldest Chaldeans. The clergy of these respective countries, prove moreover what they teach, namely: that the practice of moral and physical purity, and of certain austerities, develops the vital soulpower of self-illumination. Affording to man the control over his own immortal spirit, it gives him truly magical powers over the elementary spirits inferior to himself. In the West we find magic of as high an antiquity as in the East. The Druids of Great Britain practised it in the silent crypts of their deep caves; and Pliny devotes many a chapter to the "wisdom"<sup>24</sup> of the leaders of the Celts. The Semothees,--the Druids of the Gauls, expounded the physical as well as the spiritual sciences. They taught the secrets of the universe, the harmonious progress of the heavenly bodies, the formation of the earth, and above all--the immortality of the soul.<sup>25</sup> Into their sacred groves--natural academies built by the hand of the Invisible Architect--the initiates assembled at the still hour of midnight to learn about what man once

was and what he will be.<sup>26</sup> They needed no artificial illumination, nor life-drawing gas, to light up their temples, for the chaste goddess of night beamed her most silvery rays on their oak-crowned heads; and their white-robed sacred bards knew how to converse with the solitary queen of the starry vault. <sup>27</sup>

On the dead soil of the long by-gone past stand their sacred oaks, now dried up and stripped of their spiritual meaning by the venomous breath of materialism. But for the student of occult learning, their vegetation is still as verdant and luxuriant, and as full of deep and sacred truths, as at that hour when the arch-druid performed his magical cures, and waving the branch of mistletoe, severed with his golden sickle the green bough from its mother oak-tree. *Magic is as old as man*. It is as impossible to name the time when it sprang into existence as to indicate on what day the first man himself was born. Whenever a writer has started with the idea of connecting its first foundation in a country with some historical character, further research has proved his views groundless. Odin, the Scandinavian priest and monarch, was thought by many to have originated the practice of magic some seventy years B.C. But it was easily demonstrated that the mysterious rites of the priestesses called *Voilers, Valas*, were greatly anterior to his age.<sup>28</sup> Some modern authors were bent on proving that Zoroaster was the founder of magic, because he was the founder of the Magian religion. Ammianus Marcellinus, Arnobius, Pliny, and other ancient historians demonstrated conclusively that he was but a reformer of Magic as practiced by the Chaldeans and Egyptians. <sup>29</sup>

The greatest teachers of divinity agree that nearly all ancient books were written symbolically and in a language intelligible only to the initiated. The biographical sketch of Apollonius of Tyana affords an example. As every Kabalist knows, it embraces the whole of the Hermetic philosophy, being a counterpart in many respects of the

traditions left us of King Solomon. It reads like a fairy story, but, as in the case of the latter, sometimes facts and historical events are presented to the world under the colors of a fiction. The journey to India represents allegorically the trials of a neophyte. His long discourses with the Brahmans, their sage advice, and the dialogues with the Corinthian Menippus would, if interpreted, give the esoteric catechism. His visit to the empire of the wise men, and interview with their king Hiarchas, the oracle of Amphiaraus, explain symbolically many of the secret dogmas of Hermes. They would disclose, if understood, some of the most important secrets of nature. Eliphas Levi points out the great resemblance which exists between King Hiarchas and the fabulous Hiram, of whom Solomon procured the cedars of Lebanon and the gold of Ophir. We would like to know whether modern Masons, even "Grand Lecturers" and the most intelligent craftsmen belonging to important lodges, understand who the *Hiram* is whose death they combine together to avenge?

Putting aside the purely metaphysical teachings of the *Kabala*, if one would devote himself but to physical occultism, to the so-called branch of therapeutics, the results might benefit some of our modern sciences; such as chemistry and medicine. Says Professor Draper: "Sometimes, not without surprise, we meet with ideas *which we flatter ourselves originated in our own times.*" This remark, uttered in relation to the scientific writings of the Saracens, would apply still better to the more secret *Treatises* of the ancients. Modern medicine, while it has gained largely in anatomy, physiology, and pathology, and even in therapeutics, has lost immensely by its narrowness of spirit, its rigid materialism, its sectarian dogmatism. One school in its purblindness sternly ignores whatever is developed by other schools; and all unite in ignoring every grand conception of man or nature, developed by Mesmerism, or by American experiments on the brain--every principle which does not conform to a stolid materialism. It would require a convocation of the hostile physicians

of the several different schools to bring together what is now known of medical science, and it too often happens that after the best practitioners have vainly exhausted their art upon a patient, a mesmerist or a "healing medium" will effect a cure! The explorers of old medical literature, from the time of Hippocrates to that of Paracelsus and Van Helmont, will find a vast number of well-attested physiological and psychological facts and of measures or medicines for healing the sick which modern physicians superciliously refuse to employ.<sup>39</sup> Even with respect to surgery, modern practitioners have humbly and publicly confessed the total impossibility of their approximating to anything like the marvellous skill displayed in the art of bandaging by ancient Egyptians. The many hundred yards of ligature enveloping a mummy from its ears down to every separate toe, were studied by the chief surgical operators in Paris, and, notwithstanding that the models were before their eyes, they were unable to accomplish anything like it.

In the Abbott Egyptological collection, in New York City, may be seen numerous evidences of the skill of the ancients in various handicrafts; among others the art of lace-making; and, as it could hardly be expected but that the signs of woman's vanity should go side by side with those of man's strength, there are also specimens of artificial hair, and gold ornaments of different kinds. The *New York Tribune*, reviewing the contents of the *Ebers Papyrus*, says:--"Verily, there is no new thing under the sun. . . . Chapters 65, 66, 79, and 89 show that hair invigorators, hair dyes, pain-killers, and flea-powders were desiderata 3,400 years ago."

How few of our recent alleged discoveries are in reality new, and how many belong to the ancients, is again most fairly and eloquently though but in part stated by our eminent philosophical writer, Professor John W. Draper. His *Conflict between Religion and Science*--a great book with a very bad title--swarms with such facts.

At page 13, he cites a few of the achievements of ancient philosophers, which excited the admiration of Greece. In Babylon was a series of Chaldean astronomical observations, ranging back through nineteen hundred and three years, which Callisthenes sent to Aristotle. Ptolemy, the Egyptian king-astronomer possessed a Babylonian record of eclipses going back seven hundred and forty-seven years before our era. As Prof. Draper truly remarks: "Long-continued and close observations were necessary before some of these astronomical results that have reached our times could have been ascertained. Thus, the Babylonians had fixed the length of a tropical year within twenty-five seconds of the truth; their estimate of the sidereal year was barely two minutes in excess. They had detected the precession of the equinoxes. They knew the causes of eclipses, and, by the aid of their cycle, called *saros*, could predict them. Their estimate of the value of that cycle, which is more than 6,585 days, was within nineteen and a half minutes of the truth."

"Such facts furnish incontrovertible proof of the patience and skill with which astronomy had been cultivated in Mesopotamia, and that, with very inadequate instrumental means, it had reached no inconsiderable perfection. These old observers had made a catalogue of the stars, had divided the zodiac into twelve signs; they had parted the day into twelve hours, the night into twelve. They had, as Aristotle says, for a long time devoted themselves to observations of star-occultations by the moon. They had correct views of the structure of the solar system, and knew the order of emplacement of the planets. They constructed sundials, clepsydras, astrolabes, gnomons."

Speaking of the world of eternal truths that lies "within the world of transient delusions and unrealities," Professor Draper says: "That world is not to be discovered through the vain traditions that have brought down to us the opinion of men who lived in the morning of

civilization, nor in the *dreams of mystics* who thought that they were inspired. It is to be discovered by the investigations *of geometry, and by the practical interrogations of nature.*"

Precisely. The issue could not be better stated. This eloquent writer tells us a profound truth. He does not, however, tell us *the whole* truth, because he does not know it. He has not described the nature or extent of the knowledge imparted in the Mysteries. No subsequent people has been so proficient in geometry as the builders of the Pyramids and other Titanic monuments, antediluvian and postdiluvian. On the other hand, none has ever equalled them in the practical interrogation of nature.

An undeniable proof of this is the significance of their countless symbols. *Every one of these symbols is an embodied idea,-- combining the conception of the Divine Invisible with the earthly and visible.* The former is derived from the latter strictly through analogy according to the hermetic formula--"as below, so it is above." Their symbols show great knowledge of natural sciences and a practical study of cosmical power.

As to practical results to be obtained by "the investigations of geometry," very fortunately for students who are coming upon the stage of action, we are no longer forced to content ourselves with mere conjectures. In our own times, an American, Mr. George H. Felt, of New York, who, if he continues as he has begun, may one day be recognized as the greatest geometer of the age, has been enabled, by the sole help of the premises established by the ancient Egyptians, to arrive at results which we will give in his own language. "Firstly," says Mr. Felt, "the fundamental diagram to which all science of elementary geometry, both plane and solid, is referable; to produce arithmetical systems of proportion in a geometrical manner; to identify this figure with all the remains of architecture and sculpture,