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Box
4

Folder
7

Item
6

“In the Image of God - Man,” 1903 November 8.

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IN THE IMAGE OF GOD - MAN.

In the beginning - God, therefore, in the image of God - Man.

Genesis tells us the story of creation, of the origin of man and the origin of races. Do Genesis and science harmonize? Jewish teachers accept scientific truth? I believe in the evolutionary process through the ages. The truth of science does not destroy our Bible nor shake the foundation rock of our Judaism.

The materialist declares that man in the beginning is dust and in the end is dust. The body is dust and nothing more - no spirit. There is no soul. Unconscious matter in the beginning and matter unconscious at the end. But between is life and a world of thought and feeling. Is the body dead matter and dust unconscious without spirit and without soul? Judaism teaches in the beginning was mind conscious. The thought of Genesis is true, God formed man of the dust of the earth and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. We believe man is more than dust.

Prove that man has soul, says the doubter. Let the doubter prove that man has not soul. The doubter must justify his scepticism contrary to the faith and convictions of all the world.

Is man only a machine. Are thoughts and feelings and actions born altogether of the brain centers directing and controlling the wheels and wires of our human mechanism? Has man no free will? Is he only a creature of fate and circumstance? Our personal experience, the feelings and aspirations of our nature do not accord with this philosophy. Man is a free, willing agent; he is more than a marvelous machine. Without free will man would not be a moral and responsible being, incapable of wrong-doing and of guilt. Where would be responsibility for sin of falsehood, dishonesty or violence, with the tongue that speaks falsely, with the hand that reaches stealthily, with the arm that strikes with violence? Not what is responsible, but who is responsible? The ego, the eye, the person, commanding the brain.

and master of the body.

In the image of God - man; a divine something within our human breast. Man living and working in the presence of God, under a divine appointment. We do not accept the theory of the fall of man and the curse of God upon Adam and upon the seed of Adam through all generations. Nor do we believe in original sin, in mankind doomed and damned, unless they be saved through the blood of the atonement by the sacrifice of the Son of God. We believe man not fallen but risen and rising. Every man is a son of God. Divinity did not embody itself in one man perfect 1900 years ago but is embodied in the whole of human nature.

We do not interpret life and earth as burden and sorrow and pain, rejoicing in the escape to Heaven, welcoming the bliss eternal. Life is God-appointment, therefore not burden and misery but duty and glory and opportunity. Life is worthy and noble. In spite of the misery and suffering natural to our human struggling, life is exalted by divine purpose.

In the image of God - man, is the real basis for genuine human brotherhood. God is, and God is one. Man is, and mankind is one. The unity of God compels a unity of mankind. Therefore no tolerance, no condescension to the weak nations and the weak races and the weak religions and the poor and unfortunate of the world, but an honest and sincere faith that all are God-children therefore justice to all.

Men are agents of God with a life appointment to do the work of God. Every man is servant of God. Church is the organized force to do God's work in the world. It is the one great organization at work for righteousness. *One* Thousand says - I can't join with you. I do not believe. If not with the church, then with what will you join? A man with conscience and convictions ought not be either coward or idler when the fight is on, and the fight is always on for a nobler civilization.

The Jew should be the last of men to doubt that God is and that man has God-

appointment. Historically, the Jew is prophet of the God idea. The Jew for centuries despised and scorned of men was nevertheless not sunk in degradation; he was strong in the consciousness that he was the bearer of a divine message. Today when he is free, not scorned and not despised, he would be more honorable and more honored if he stood loyally by his heritage. How can one be Jew and not be God-believer? How can one be Jew and not have faith in the divinity of man? This faith sustained him through the centuries of darkness. It sustains him today. It was, and it is the real basis of his appeal that the world give him freedom and justice. The Jew, like other men is fashioned in the image divine.

If then, in the image of God - man, let's live as though God were in the world. Let us work as though there were a power making for righteousness. Let us have part in the fight for the good and the decent and the honorable, for a better and a nobler civilization. Let us help the coming of Messiah, not the anointed one, but the Messianic day when justice and righteousness shall be established, when freedom and peace shall bless the world.

